A

Search for the Source

Of the

Whirlpool of Artifice

Kate Robinson

A Search for the Source of the Whirlpool of Artifice

Abstract

Giulio Camillo (1480-1544) was a poet, a scientist and an image-maker. He saw the birth of printing in his home-town of Venice, the fruit of the Renaissance in Rome, Paris and Padua and he witnessed the seeds of the Reformation. Renowned throughout Europe, he was acquainted with, amongst others, Erasmus, Titian, King Francis 1st and Pope Julius II. Three months before he died, Camillo dictated the text of his most important, and secret, work to his agent, Girolamo Muzio. Muzio's transcription of *L'idea del Theatro* was eventually published in Florence in 1550.

Camillo's secret, revealed in *L'idea,* is about man's relationship to the heavens. Camillo envisaged a living, tangible network of relationships that holds the cosmos in being. Heavenly influences, in the form of 'celestial streams', rain down on the earth. Man is as much a part of the earth as he is made up of the stars. Rocks and stones, earth, flowers and trees are alive and sentient of their holy origin. The very skin and hair of man is receptive to the flows of heavenly love. But this is not all that is contained in *L'idea del Theatro.* For Camillo believed that it is the sun, and not the earth, which has pride of place in the universe. He knew that the sun is the centre.

Camillo dictated *L'idea del Theatro* a matter of months after Copernicus's *Revolution of the Heavenly Spheres.* Unlike Copernicus, however, Camillo did not use mathematics to prove his theories. Instead, Giulio Camillo's conception of the universe is made of a vast array of images. The pantheon – or Theatre – of the earth and heavens is described, by Camillo, in terms of the visual sign.

Arising out of a dialogue with contemporary conceptual art, the aim of this work is to look at the connection between language and the art of science in the sixteenth century that was able to produce such a man as Giulio Camillo. His ideas are explored through the lens of some of his contemporaries. His letters through Erasmus; his imagery through Francesco Colonna; and his science through Copernicus. Using Camillo's images as a guide, a Virtual Reality Model of the Theatre forms the final part of the work.

A Search for the Source of the Whirlpool of Artifice

An exploration of Giulio Camillo's *idea*,
through the lens of his writings and contemporaries.

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In memory of David Brown
1925-2002

For my mother and father.

Chapter One:
The Whirlpool

This is a work about Giulio Camillo, a Renaissance man who used descriptions of visual imagery to express his message in a short volume called *L'idea del Theatro*. According to Camillo, *L'idea del Theatro* was about 'the eternal nature of all things'.[1] Camillo understood that there was an important relationship between the image and memory. Within an image a pattern of knowledge could be stored and later retrieved, as it could impress upon the mind's eye an impression so visceral and emotionally significant that it had the equivalence of a vast data bank. Like a seal in wax, like a signature, images gave access to immediate, instinctive recall. In *L'idea del Theatro*, Camillo describes the universe in highly visual and mythical terms, although there is not a single drawing or diagram in the book. The world, the planets and history are pictured as a vast network of visual relationships. This imaginary network is arranged within the context of a celestial Theatre.

Camillo was funded generously to develop his theories by the King of France, François 1st. François made only one condition: Camillo should not divulge his secret idea to anyone else but the King. Camillo remained true to this stipulation for most of his life: he kept his secret. But then, in Milan, three months before he died, Camillo told his theories to a trusted friend. Girolamo Muzio wrote down everything Camillo said, and *L'idea del Theatro* was eventually published in 1550. For the period, Camillo had some radical views. He talked about the connection of man to the heavens, of the place of the world in relationship to the sun, and time. He believed that the sun, rather than the earth, had pride of place in the universe; he knew that the earth moved, and he was sceptical that it had all been created, literally, in the course of seven days. *L'idea* was dictated to Muzio only a matter of months after Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus* was published in 1543. It is possible that Camillo and Copernicus may have crossed paths at either the universities of Bologna or Padua. Camillo's secret was about the nature of man in space.

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[1] Camillo, Giulio, *L'idea del Theatro* (Florence: Lorenzo Torentino, 1550), pp.10-11.

Camillo, posthumously, was referred to by a number of scholars during the sixteenth century, including Ariosto (*Orlando furioso,* XLVI, 12), and has inspired a number of contemporary artists from different disciplines, including, for example the composer, John Fuller (*The Theatre of Memory,* Proms, 1981); the video artist Bill Viola (*The Theatre of Memory,* video installation, 1985) and the writers, Lina Bolzoni (*Il teatro della memoria: studi su G. Camillo* (Padua: Liviana, 1984) and Umberto Eco (review of Mario Turello, Daniele Cortolezzis: Anima Artificiale. Il Teatro magico di Giulio Camillo, in *L'Espresso,* 14th August 1988). A brief web-surf will reflect the current burgeoning response to his work.[2]

In Frances Yates's influential book *The Art of Memory* (London, 1966) Camillo's Theatre is the first, in a long Renaissance tradition, of a series of repositories of secret Hermetic teachings that reaches its apex in Shakespeare's Globe. Yates brands these secret teachings 'occult Neoplatonism' and identifies:

> the recurrence of a pattern which seems to run through the Renaissance. We saw it first in the memory Theatre which Giulio Camillo brought as a secret to the King of France. We saw it again in the Memory Seals which [Giordano] Bruno carried from country to country. We see it finally in the Theatre Memory System in the book which [Robert] Fludd dedicated to the King of England. And this system contains, as a secret hidden within it, factual information about the Globe Theatre.[3]

Based on the assumption that 'Camillo's Memory Theatre [was]...a distortion of the plan of the real Vitruvian theatre',[4] Frances Yates created a visual diagram of the images described in *L'idea.* Working with her sister who had studied at Glasgow School of Art, Yates's version of the Theatre forms an intriguing pullout section at the centre of *The Art of Memory.* This semi-

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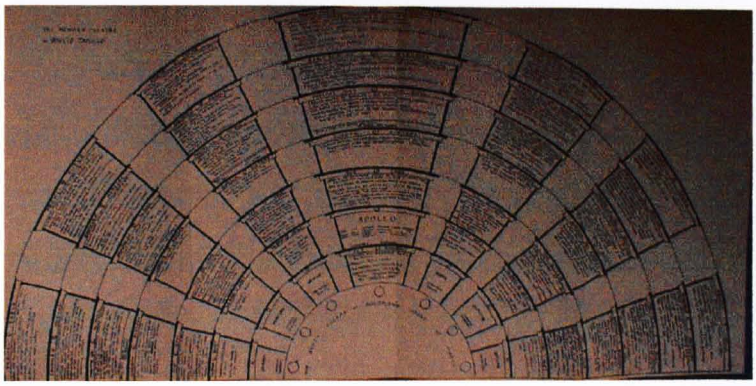
[2] See Mattusek's website: www.sfb-performativ.de for a précis of contemporary works.
[3] Yates, Francis, *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), p.341.
[4] *Ibid.*, p.136.

circular arena is filled with the sisters' tiny, neat handwriting, noting the places where Camillo placed each of the hundreds of images that are described in *L'idea.* It must have taken obsessive patience to complete.



Camillo's Theatre according to Frances Yates

My own introduction to Camillo came via Yates. It resulted in an exhibition at the Collins Gallery, Glasgow.[5] Yates's map of Camillo's Theatre was invaluable in terms of providing detailed information which inspired many of the images at the exhibition and that are interspersed in this text. Having now studied Camillo's original text, the achievement of Yates and her sister in creating this map is even clearer to me. *The Art of Memory* is a fascinating book, full of intrigue and mystery, written with panache. However I do not now think that Yates's scheme is correct in some important regards, as I discuss.

The sculptures in the Collins exhibition were based on mythical motifs represented in Camillo's Theatre, and on current theories based on the function of memory. My response, at that stage, was intuitive. I purposely did not read too much about Camillo and had not yet seen an original copy of *L'idea del Theatro,* as I wanted to feel around the subject. In retrospect, I now see that there was an even division between 'mythical' and 'scientific' approaches to the theme, although, at the time, I was not aware of a conscious decision that this should be so.

[5] *The Theatre of Memory,* 31st March-5th May 2001, Collins Gallery, University of Strathclyde.

The centrepiece of the exhibition was of two suspended figures made of transparent resin, titled *Juno and Apollo.* These figures were subsequently suspended between trees, outdoors.

Juno and Apollo in the Trees, resin, 2001

The theme of Juno was repeated in a series of paintings: *Juno in the Clouds.* A group of small bronzes, titled *Apollo and the Muses,* showed a male figure surrounded by tall bell-like female forms:

Apollo and the Muses, bronze, 2001

The Furies was a group of three small female forms cast in cement fondue, with silk shrouds:

The Furies, cement fondue, 2001

Endymion was a figure cast in white resin, draped in silk. I explain some of the 'mythical' allusions behind Camillo's Theatre in Chapter Two.

Other work at the Collins exhibition was based on recent research into the processes of memory. V.S. Ramachandran has said that 'Memory has legitimately been called the Holy Grail of neuroscience'.[6] From a medical perspective it has been found that it is the *hippocampus* that is responsible for memory. The *hippocampus* is a tiny sea-horse shaped organ in the centre of the brain. Inside the *hippocampus* itself is the *amygdala*. If the *hippocampus* is able to store the facts of memories, the *amygdala* feels them. It is thought that if the *amygdala* is stimulated – in the sense that it is emotionally aroused – the ability to store information in the *hippocampus* is increased.[7] In this respect, Giulio Camillo's understanding of the emotive significance of imagery in what we remember was prescient.

Heart, bronze, 2001.

Following in a long tradition of artists working in a medical environment, I studied and worked for a period at the Department of Human Anatomy at Glasgow University, where I analysed images of the body.[8] In particular, I scrutinized the heart and the brain. I looked at molecular images of the lower, mid and upper pons, for example, and drew what I saw. I used the conventions of the laboratory to make decisions about what sections of the body I would study and I was faithful to what I witnessed under the microscope.

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[6] Ramachandran, V.S. & Blakeslee, Sandra, *Phantoms in the Brain* (London: Fourth Estate, 1988), p.148.

[7] For other accessible and scholarly work on this subject I have turned to Damasio, Antonio, *The Feeling of What Happens* (London: Vintage, 2000) and Greenfield, Susan, *Brain Story* (London: BBC Worldwide Ltd, 2000). For a medical perspective, see, for example, West, Mark. J. and Gundersen, H.J.G., 'Unbiased Stereological Estimation of the Number of Neurons in the Human Hippocampus', *The Journal of Comparative Neurology* 296:1-22 (1990).

[8] The exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, for example, *Spectacular Bodies,* 19th October 2000-14th January 2001, showcased work from contemporary artists on the theme of art and science. The emphasis was on bio-medical work, and the essays in the accompanying catalogue focused on the parallel relationship between visual art and medical matters. See Kemp, Martin and Wallace, Marina, *Spectacular Bodies* (London: Hayward Gallery Publishing, 2000).

Brain: upper pons, ink on paper, 2001.

The final work in the exhibition at the Collins Gallery was a VRML (Virtual Reality Mark-up Language) model of Camillo's Theatre.[9] This collaborative work was created using over two hundred computer generated images based on the imagery in Camillo's Theatre. It was projected onto the gallery wall. A CD is included with this text, and I discuss it in more detail in Chapter Seven. The VRML model is an attempt to re-assess the layout and schematization of Camillo's most important work.

As can be gleaned from some of the titles of the artistic works that have been inspired by Camillo, in fact their source comes more from Frances Yates's *The Art of Memory,* than directly from Camillo's *L'idea del Theatro.* Influenced by the rich veins of scholarship at the Warburg Institute, in London, where Yates for many years was based, she writes about the subject of memory with passion and her book is seductive, sparking off other fruitful lines of enquiry. Ted Hughes, for example, in his powerful work, *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being* (London, 1992), talks about the idea of a Memory Theatre as a 'systematically linked hierarchy of images, uniting Heaven and Earth'[10] and goes on to offer a key to a reading of Shakespeare.

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[9] The VRML was created in collaboration with Carl Smith, at Glasgow University. *The Theatre of Memory* CDRom, 2001.

[10] Hughes, Ted, *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being* (London: Faber & Faber, 1992), p.32. Hughes says of 'Camillo's Memory Theatre', that it was one of 'the most peculiar memory systems to influence Bruno'.
Though Hughes uses the terminology of 'Occult Neoplatonism', he shows some wariness.
He says:

> Without assuming that Shakespeare was a devout Occult Neoplatonist, or was more than amused by the ingenuities, curious about the claims, and intrigued by some of the concepts, one can suppose that out of this vast complex of archaic, magical, religious ideas and methods, the following items caught his attention:

This 'basic structural pattern' is a key, which Hughes equates with DNA, operating at the level of the 'poetic organism'.[11]

Yates interpreted aspects of Camillo's schema in terms of her theories on the use of memory treatises, in the era before and after the advent of print. Yates's broad ranging approach synthesized diverse branches of knowledge from visual art to theatre and the beginnings of science. However, at times, her core conviction of the central importance of what she calls the 'Classical Art of Memory' compromises the integrity of her subject matter. So strong in fact is Yates's conviction that memory is the solution to an understanding of Camillo's work that 'The Idea of the Theatre' becomes, for Yates in *The Art of Memory*, the 'Idea of the Memory Theatre',[12] a title that Camillo himself never uses.

This is not to say that the connection between visual imagery and memory is not a significant factor in Camillo's Theatre. For Lu Beery Wenneker and Lina Bolzoni, Yates's interpretation of Camillo and his Theatre is an accurate representation. In Wenneker's annotated English translation of *L'idea del Theatro* she quotes Yates, saying the 'occult art' of the Theatre pointed to the 'highest reality through a magically activated imagination'.[13] Bolzoni, in *Il teatro della memoria: studi su Giulio Camillo* (Padua: Liviana, 1984), likewise quotes from Yates describing Camillo's work as a 'theatre of the world' (*teatro*

> The idea of an inclusive system, a grand spiritual synthesis, reconciling Protestant and Catholic extremes in an integrated vision of union with the Divine Love.
>
> The idea of a syncretic mythology, in which all archaic mythological figures and events are available as a thesaurus of glyphs or token symbols – the personal language of the new metaphysical system...
>
> ...The idea of these images as internally structured poetic images – the idea of the single image as a package of precisely folded, multiple meanings, consistent with the meanings of a unified system.... (pp.32-33.)

Hughes includes many other ideas in his list. I include only those that most closely relate to the theme of this work.

[11] *Ibid.*, p.xi.

[12] Yates, p.132. Yates then converts this into a 'Memory Theatre of the World', p.171, to 'the Hermetic Memory Theatre', p.203, and finally the 'Theatre of the World', p.339.

[13] Wenneker, Lu Beery, 'An Examination of L'idea del Theatro of Giulio Camillo, including an annotated translation, with special attention to his influence on Emblem Literature and Iconography', (unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Pittsburgh, 1970) p.38 quoting Yates, pp.151 and 157 respectively.

del mondo) finding its source in the 'classical art of memory' (*arte mnemonica classica).*[14] Nevertheless, while Yates, Wenneker and Bolzoni have shown that Camillo's theatre can be seen as an example of memorial practice, I think there are other perspectives. My study looks at these.

The theme of the use of a trained memory has been developed since Yates's work on the subject. Mary Carruthers, for example, in the meticulous *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge, 1990) discusses the host of memory devices and techniques that were developed up to the first century AD and through the Medieval period: memory wheels, rhymes, and systems of visual association were highly evolved. Lina Bolzoni has subsequently focused attention on the imaginative use of memory games, as well as Giulio Camillo's influence on didactic principles at the Venetian Accademia della Fama, in *The Gallery of Memory: Literary and Iconographic Models in the Age of the Printing Press* (Toronto: 2001). Current interest in improving the memory is itself a growing business. Many contemporary works on the subject use techniques that can be dated back to the Renaissance and earlier.

While I think the use of 'memorial practice' in Camillo's Theatre is a means to an end, rather than the end and goal of the work itself, there are other aspects that now distance me from Yates's and others' positions regarding Camillo. For Yates, Wenneker and Bolzoni, Camillo's work is rooted in a hermetic and neoplatonic tradition and the 'astral magic' (*la magia astrale)*[15] of Marsilio Ficino. This, I think, does not fully take into account the nuances, and subtleties of interpretation, of the over-arching Aristotelian tradition in which Camillo's work is rooted. This is not by any means to deny that Platonic and other influences played a major role in Camillo's philosophy. However, as Schmitt has shown, some of the 'terminological handles [of Aristotelian study] ...are in need of re-casting, or at least of re-clarification'.[16] 'Neoplatonism', for example, 'is not itself a term adequately rarified to give the full flavour of

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[14] Bolzoni, Lina, *Il teatro della memoria:studi su Giulio Camillo* (Padua: Liviana, 1984) 'La Yates...ha fatto un'analisi accurata delle fonti del 'teatro' ed ha mostrato come sul tronco dell'arte mnemonica classica si innestino cabala, tradizione ermetica e neoplatonica, elementi aristotelici, il tutto mediato attraverso le posizioni pichiane e la magia astrale di Ficino.' p.2.

[15] Bolzoni, *Il teatro della memoria...* p.2.

[16] Schmitt, Charles B. *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (London: Harvard University Press, 1983), p.112.

traditions such as Christian Cabala and *prisca sapientia*'.[17] As De Luca has recently said, the tone is set 'for a new approach'.[18]

Gatti, in her recent work on the 'scientific' Giordano Bruno, remarks that the result of Yates's thesis leads to a 'radical concept of incommensurability between the mechanistic and magical worldviews'.[19] Gatti attempts, instead, to reappraise Bruno's work in terms of what she sees as 'the twentieth-century scientific discussion to which Bruno's work is most relevant'.[20] Alexander Koyré had long valued Bruno's contribution to the contemporary philosophy of science in terms of his (that is, Bruno's) understanding of heliocentrism and the infinity of the universe.[21] Gatti's emphasis, on the other hand, is methodological. She defines the crucial issue of 'the twentieth-century scientific discussion' as 'the conflict over theory'.[22] Gatti classifies an 'optimistic' and a 'pessimistic' approach to theory. The former involves 'an evaluation of theory as progress through refutation toward ever more refined and satisfactory premises'. The latter views 'the necessary anarchy of method and the impossibility of exact observation of a chaotic world'. With the birth of a 'new romantic philosophy' that emphasized 'mental paradigms accompanied by the concept of nature as a vitalistic process'[23] Gatti believes that Bruno has much to offer in terms of reconciliation between these two opposing 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic' views of theoretical practice. This she identifies as Bruno's 'dynamic, vitalistic concept of matter.'[24]

Camillo, likewise, has a contribution to make to this 'scientific' debate. Though this contribution has been neglected in recent years, this has not always been the case. A life of Camillo published in *Nuova Raccolta d'Opusculi Scientifici e*

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[17] *Ibid.*
[18] De Luca, Elena, 'Silent Meanings: Emblems, Lay Culture and Political Awareness in Sixteenth Century Bologna' *Emblematica*, 12 (2002), p.67, n.11.
[19] Gatti, Hilary, *Giordano Bruno & Renaissance Science*, (USA: Cornell University Press, 2002), p.1.
[20] *Ibid.* p.9.
[21] Koyré gives Bruno, with his interpretation of Copernicus, much credit for breaking out of the 'Closed World'. See Koyré, Alexander, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957); see also Gatti, pp.99-127.
[22] Gatti, p.9.
[23] *Ibid.* p.8. The romantic philosophy of science itself culminated, according to Gatti, in the theory of evolution. See also Jardine, Nicholas and Cunningham, Andrew, Eds. *Romanticism and the sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
[24] Gatti, p.8.

Filologici in Venice in 1755, for example, assesses his work in terms of his contribution to science and language.[25] For the author, Federigo Altani, the connection between science and literature was seamless, as it was for the other contributors to this Venetian journal, which was to be published up until 1760. *L'idea del Theatro,* as I hope to show, also offers, like Bruno's work, a systematic, dynamic vision of animated matter in which everything from the rocks and stones to the very hairs of our head is sentient and receptive of celestial energy. I think it may even be fruitful to assess Camillo in terms of his contribution to theories of an infinite universe. While I do not think that Camillo, like Bruno, necessarily envisioned the universe as infinite in the sense that it is spatially boundless, his animistic understanding coupled with his perceptual/sign system do point towards a comprehension of infinite dimensions. That Camillo should have had a close working relationship with one of the greatest painters of the age, Titian, suggests at the very least that he was aware of the profound implications of the new theory and practice of perspective. *L'idea* offers a system based on a radical reconstruction of space.

Bolzoni's compilation of Camillo's known work (*L'idea del Theatro e altri scritti di retorica* (Turin: 1990)), and his manuscripts, including *De Transmutatione* and *L'idea dell'eloquenza* (*Il teatro della memoria: studi su Giulio Camillo* (Padua: 1984)) show the scope of his interests. In *L'idea dell'eloquenza,* for example, written circa 1530, he discusses the nature and order of the planets, in which he attempts a classification that begins to depart from a rigidly orthodox Ptolemaic standpoint.[26] My study has concentrated on aspects of Camillo's *L'idea del Theatro,* but I wonder whether both this as well as other examples of his work should be reappraised in a more 'scientific' light.

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[25] Altani, Federigo, 'Memorie intorno alla vita ed all' opere di G. Camillo Delminio' in *Nuova Raccolta d'Opusculi Scientifici e Filologici* (Venice: Simone Occhi, 1755), pp. 239-288.

[26] Bolzoni, *Il teatro della memoria...* '...nel primo quaternario entrano il cielo immobile, Saturno, Giove e Marte, scendendo de li quali il cielo immobile, siccome io dissi, è purissimamente terreo, Saturno acquatico, Giove aereo, Marte igneo; nel secondo seguente quaternario vengono il Sole, Venere, Mercurio e la Luna...il Sole è igneo, Venere aerea, Mercurio acquatico e la Luna terrea...' p.119.

I do not now believe that *L'idea del Theatro* can be assessed in Yates's terms of a Vitruvian grid. Nor do I believe that Camillo was necessarily talking about a 'Theatre', in the sense that we now use the word. Camillo talks about being the 'author of this Theatre' (*auttore di questo Theatro*),[27] about making 'scholars like spectators' (*facciamo gli studiosi come spettatori*).[28] While *L'idea* is about a spatial arrangement of visual knowledge, I do not think it is necessary to think of it as representative of a 'theatrical building'. It is debatable whether or not Camillo ever created his 'Theatre', and if so, what scale it was.[29] Models may have been made in Paris and Venice, but neither of these survived. We cannot tell whether these models, if they existed at all, were of an architectural nature, or whether they resembled a kind of library,[30] or a gallery of images. An illustrated book of *L'idea del Theatro* by Titian, with whom Camillo was an associate, sadly did not survive a fire at the Escorial in 1671. Perhaps Camillo's Theatre was a type of orrery, designed to move, showing the divine arrangement of the earth and sun and planets animated by 'celestial streams' of energy. Whatever Camillo meant by 'Theatre', I think it was a thrilling development of the perceptual theory that had hitherto prevailed.

Camillo was certainly not without his detractors. Even his earliest promoter was equivocal: Lodovico Domenichi, in his dedicatory letter to Don Diego Hurtado,[31] of the first edition of *L'idea del Theatro* implied that Camillo's reputation may have suffered because he had 'promised too much'.[32] Tiraboschi, writing in 1824, said that the Theatre was a 'vain and incredible thing'.[33] Within the last fifty years, he has variously been called 'one of the

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[27] *L'idea*, p.39.
[28] *Ibid.*, p.14.
[29] The series of letters between Erasmus and Zwichem regarding the construction of Camillo's Theatre that Zwichem saw (possibly in Venice), are at best vague. Zwichem talks about a 'wooden construction with many images and caskets' in his letter from Padua of 8th June 1532, but he is unspecific about the size of the work. See Chapter Three.
[30] Camillo talks about having 'a great anthology' of work in the Theatre, mentioning specifically Cicero and Boccaccio. *L'idea*, p.84.
[31] Imperial ambassador to Venice, 1539-46. Famous for his book collection, particularly of Greek manuscripts. He was assisted in acquiring this collection by a Dutch scholar, Arnoldo Arlenio. See Anthony Hobson, *Renaissance Book Collecting: Jean Grolier and Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, Their Books and Bindings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[32] *L'idea...*, dedicatory letter by Lodovico Domenichi,(Florence: Lorenzo Torentino, 1550), p.4.
[33] Quoted in Wenneker, p102.

most famous men of the sixteenth century',[34] the 'peak of absurdity',[35] 'an amusing...impostor',[36] and most recently the 'great actor of the Renaissance'.[37] Yates, herself, was ambiguous: while two whole chapters of *The Art of Memory* were devoted to Camillo and the Theatre, he is made out to be a bit of a buffoon, a stammerer, 'Poor Camillo'.[38]

Perhaps Camillo provoked such a mixed response because *L'Idea* is such an unusual book. Essentially about the planets and the layout of the heavens, it also touches on medicine, myth, philosophy, theology and social commentary. The broadness of Camillo's scope, in itself, was not necessarily unique. Other writers of the period such as Pietro d'Abano, Giovanni Pontano and Sacro Bosco were wide-ranging in the themes they treated. What marks out Camillo is his reliance on the visual image – on the sign – to reveal his meaning. *L'idea* contains over two hundred distinct visual metaphors, which are graphically described in text, although there are no drawings, as such. In effect, Camillo had created a visual system that enabled him to articulate his ideas, quite literally, in an *imaginative* way.

There are levels of symbolism and myth inherent in the book that reveal Camillo was trying to describe something very complex; the work is multi-layered, though many of the references, now, are obscure. I remember first being drawn to the Theatre because I felt as though Camillo was telling a story, not in the way that a narrative painting might tell a story, but in the sense that there were connections between each of the images, across the *space* of the Theatre, that he intended the viewer to pluck images from across the entire network of the Theatre and use them to reconstruct, reassemble, a meaningful pattern - a three-dimensional visual language. It was also remarkable that while he was clearly describing something mythic and visual,

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[34] Yates, quoting *Enciclopedia italiana* in *The Art of Memory*, p.129.
[35] Bolgar, *The Classical Heritage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), p.434.
[36] Levi in *Collected Works of Erasmus 6: Ciceronianus*, Ed. A.H.T. Levi, trans. Betty Knott-Sharpe (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1986), n.308, p.562-563.
[37] Giulio Camillo Delminio *De L'Imitation*, translated into French by Francoise Graziani with introduction and notes by Lina Bolzoni, (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1996). My translation.
[38] Yates, p.132.

he was doing this from the point of view of an orator, a wordsmith. He gave no consideration to the style of the image: it was pure content.[39]

The Banquet of Mercury, 2001[40]

In the British Library a copy of Petrarch's poems, printed by Aldus Manutius in 1514, includes the hand-written notes of Giulio Camillo. In tiny, precise letters in red and sepia ink, his words mark the margins as well as blank pages inserted into the printed script. The precision and detail of his notes are intriguing. On page forty-nine of this copy of the *Canzoniere,* Camillo has inserted a tiny watercolour drawing at the bottom of the page. It shows a landscape with trees and rolling hills and a small town in the distance with a spire and a dome. It is quite crudely painted, and the colours are dull, but it lights up the text. I think that this image may be inserted here because, for Camillo, the number forty-nine was important and he wanted to highlight the significance of the page number. According to Camillo, the forty-nine words of the Lord's Prayer made it an auspicious, or magical, number.[41] The number seven – or seven times seven – was similarly important in the arrangement of the Theatre. Marsilio Ficino had written that 'The old custom of the philosophers was to conceal the divine mysteries with the numbers and figures of mathematics and with poetic fictions.'[42] It was a commonplace of the time to believe that mysteries could be revealed through the numerological analysis of text.

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[39] He was in fact interested in style, as his *Trattato dell'imitazione* illustrates. Nevertheless this does not contradict his position regarding *L'idea.*

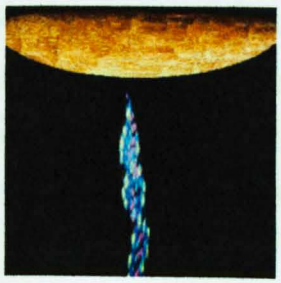
[40] 'Under the Banquet of Mercury will be an image of an elephant...because it is said...to be the most religious animal of all the beasts...Since the above view came from the gossip of the myths, this subject appertains to Mercury, as the patron of language and the telling of tales.' *L'idea,* p. 26.

[41] In *L'idea* p.13, he discusses its significance, saying 'the prayer that we call the Lord's Prayer, according to the Hebrew text written by Matthew, is of forty nine words.'[41]

[42] Ficino, Marsilio *Omnia Opere Plotini,* ed. Frederick Creuzer (Oxford: 1835, vol. 1, p. xi), quoted in Levi, p. 119.

For a number of reasons, I was able to spend only a few minutes with this book in the Library, and it was, to be honest, like seeing a lover, imagined for years, naked for the first time. I didn't attempt to analyse the text in detail. I tried purely to get an impression of Camillo from the marks he made, rather than the sense of what he said. And I admit that his script surprised me. Camillo's prose, captured by Muzio in *L'idea,* is flamboyant, if not flowery. He digresses in wild tangents, spiralling into endless sentences made of impossible clauses. Sometimes it is difficult to keep the thread. And yet his handwriting, here on the pages of the *Canzoniere,* was measured and economical. It was balanced, methodical, precise. He clearly had an eye for the layout of a page, knowing how and where to place his words in order to contain the maximum amount of information.

To play, for a moment, Devil's advocate, I had to ask whether these annotations by Camillo were the mark of a man who could be charged - as he is accused by the seemingly rational Erasmus - with being a 'Nosoponus', a modern-day train-spotter, an anorak. There seems to be something random, illogical, even capricious, in imposing on Petrarch an interpretation that is so arbitrary as to depend on page number. His notations were certainly a flagrant act of graffiti. Captivating as his script appeared, turning this printed Renaissance text into an illuminated manuscript, was its insertion nevertheless without meaning? Of course my answer to this devilish, doubting question is no. But I have borne the doubt and carried the question, instigated by Erasmus, Tiraboschi, Bolgar and others, throughout my enquiry, in the back of my mind. It added salt to the dish.



Gordian's Knot at the level of Mercury, 2001

My aim has been to look at the connection between language, and the art of science in the sixteenth century that was able to produce such a man as Camillo. I have limited my research, by looking at Camillo through the lens of three of his contemporaries: Desiderius Erasmus, Francesco Colonna, and Nicolaus Copernicus. Camillo was personally acquainted with Erasmus; it is likely that he knew Colonna, if not personally (though this is probable) then intimately through his work and philosophy; and it is possible that he crossed paths with Copernicus. These three men, I think, exemplify different intellectual aspects of the century, all of which shaped Giulio Camillo.

The debacle caused by Erasmus's *Ciceronianus* caused a Europe-wide sensation. Erasmus equated the so-called 'Ciceronians' with paganism and was to say that they posed as great a 'threat to study' as 'Luther caused in religion'.[43] The name of Camillo was at the centre of this conflagration. Francesco Colonna used both words and the visual image in a mesmerising concoction to illustrate his philosophy. His vision of the world, I argue, followed Aquinas and was rooted in Aristotelianism. I think Colonna offers a key to a reading of Camillo, a key that opens the door to the philosophy that formed the basis of his ideas. Copernicus was the first man mathematically to prove that the sun was at the centre of the universe. Aristarchus (c. 310-230 BC) had known it; Nicolaus of Cusa (1401-1464) suggested it in 1440; I think Camillo knew it. Certainly the whole of Camillo's idea revolves around the planets. By examining Camillo's *L'idea del Theatro* through the lens of these three men I hope to show that Camillo was constructing a spatial calculus using the terminology of visual art, words and myth.

In Chapter Two, I give an analysis of six of the seven levels of the Theatre beginning at the 'Banquet' and leading to 'Prometheus'. These are the levels concerned with nature, art and man. I will also look at Frances Yates's version of the Theatre as well as other models of 'data space' suggested by the artist Bill Viola. I hope that this will give a flavour of the context of *L'idea del Theatro* as a whole.

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[43] Allen, H.M. (Ed), *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterdami* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937) *Ep*:2682:8-13.

Chapter Three focuses on Erasmus, the great humanist philologist and translator, at the heart of whose *Ciceronianus* (Paris, 1528) Camillo is mentioned. Erasmus and Camillo both lived for a period near the house of the printer Aldus Manutius, in Venice, in the early fifteen hundreds, and were part of a cultural circle that included Titian, Aretin, Bembo and Serlio. 'Camillo is nearer than Erasmus to the scientific movements, still veiled in magic, which are stirring obscurely in the Venetian academies',[44] says Yates. There is, I think, in Camillo, less magic and more science than is credited by Yates. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that for Camillo magic and science is the same thing. At any rate, Camillo's theories and discoveries discomfited Erasmus, though they equally intrigued him, bringing down a rain of vitriol in the *Ciceronianus* that was to send shock waves through Europe. I will ask why it was that Erasmus was so threatened by Camillo.

Chapters Four and Five are based on a comparison between the work of Francesco Colonna and Camillo. Colonna is an intriguing and shadowy character. His *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* was published anonymously by Aldus Manutius in 1499. It was years later that the identity of the author was revealed, and even now it is still contested. Variously described, Colonna may have been a Venetian monk or a Roman prince. Whatever Colonna's origin, there are a number of striking correlations between his work and the work of Camillo, even though the form of the two books is widely divergent. Colonna's work has famously defied categorization, being described as an erotic novella, a handbook of alchemy, or even as a garden-design manual. Nevertheless, for all their dissimilarity in style, Camillo and Colonna share central motifs.

Chapter Four looks at issues regarding each author's use of emblematic material, and addresses their work in terms of memory practice and the uses of hieroglyphic and iconographic grammar. I will look in detail at two of their shared emblematic motifs and examine how these may be interpreted in terms of theories of 'mythical time'. I will examine how each author uses a

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[44] Yates, p.158.

technique of progressive interpretation of an image in order to present his message. I will discuss this in reference particularly to the Medieval doctrine of Aristotle's *topics,* and assess how this profoundly influenced the work of both authors.

Chapter Five looks in greater depth at some of the significant shared motifs in the *Hypnerotomachia* and *L'idea del Theatro.* I will assess the circular layout of Colonna's Garden in the Island of Cytherea, making comparisons with Camillo's Theatre, and discuss the likely influence that Camillo and Colonna were to make on the 'theatres' at, for example, the *Orto Botanico* – the first Botanical Gardens made at Padua in 1545 – and the first anatomical theatre, also at Padua, created in 1594. I will appraise Colonna's influence on Camillo in terms of the layout and the use of the motif of a Theatre to describe planetary arrangement. This chapter will also begin to unravel some of Camillo's and Colonna's ideas of 'vision', based on their assumption of the cosmic influence of divine love in a world in which all that is, is holy.

The penultimate chapter assesses Camillo's *L'idea del Theatro* in terms of its place in the history of astronomy. This will put him in the context of such thinkers as Agostino Nifo, and Allesandro Achillini, both from the University of Padua, who early in the sixteenth century had criticized the astronomical theories of Ptolemy. A critique of contemporary astronomy written in 1581 by Clavius, a Professor of Mathematics, mentions the 'fluid heaven' theory, of which Giovanni Pontano and Pietro d'Abano were advocates. Direct comparisons can be made between this theory and *L'idea.* Even more than the 'fluid heaven' theory, however, Camillo's work needs to be analysed in terms of the 'celestial channels' theory. This was discussed by Clavius in his critique, and was also mentioned by Nicola Partenio Giannettasio. Camillo himself explicitly discusses 'celestial channels' at length in *L'idea del Theatro.* The final part of the chapter will make a literary comparison between *L'idea* and Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus,* and discuss Camillo's theories regarding planetary arrangement and the movement of the earth.

The final chapter looks at the spatial arrangement of the sun and the planets in Camillo's schema and attempts a reassessment of the layout of the Theatre. As I hope will be apparent from the preceding chapters, the focus of Camillo's *L'idea* was astronomical. I have found no evidence to support Yates's assumption that the Theatre was based on a Vitruvian grid or that he was following Sebastiano Serlio whose influential treatises on architecture were published in 1545.[45] In this chapter I will analyse the VRML model creted in 2001, and will propose the locus of the centre of Camillo's Theatre.

Before turning to an analysis of *L'idea* in Chapter Two, I would like to mention a motif in Camillo's *Trattato delle materie* (Venice: 1544) in which he describes an *artificiosa rota,* or artificial wheel. The *artificiosa rota* fits within a long tradition of mnemonic, rhetorical and scientific wheels dating from the twelfth century in evidence throughout Europe.[46] The purpose of Camillo's *artificiosa rota* was literary: it was designed to enable Camillo to compose a sonnet in celebration of a Duke.[47] The *artificiosa rota* is interesting because it shows how Camillo was concerned with the use of language, how he played with text, and as Lina Bolzoni has demonstrated, how he may be seen as an early deconstructionist.[48] In this spiralling circular arrangement Camillo fools around with ideas, with words and even emotions. He calls the centre, or 'generative nucleus', of the wheel the 'whirlpool of artifice' (*gorgo dell'artificio*).[49]

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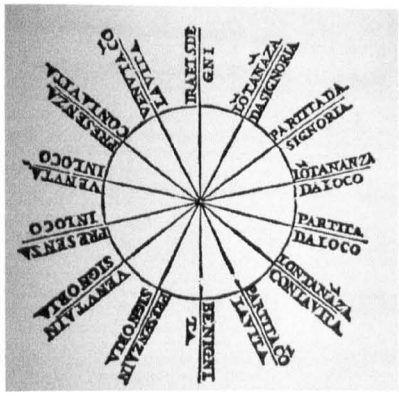
[45] Serlio, Sebastiano, *Libro d'Architettura* (Paris:1545).
[46] See Carruthers, Mary, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp.251-253. Carruthers suggests that the origin of the wheels is in 'the practical discipline of monastic prayer'; also Bolzoni, Lina, trans. Jeremy Parzen, *The Gallery of Memory: Literary and Iconographic Models in the Age of the Printing Press,* (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp.23-82 and Yates, pp.173-230.
[47] The sonnet was in celebration of Ercole d'Este, when he became Duke of Ferrara. See Bolzoni, *Gallery of Memory,* p. 43.
[48] See Bolzoni's introduction to *De L'Imitation.*
[49] See Bolzoni, *Gallery of Memory,* pp.43-44.



Giulio Camillo's *Artificiosa rota,* illustrated in *Opere,* (Venice: Domenico Farri, 1579)
A more complex version is in the earlier *Due Trattati ...,* (Venice: Farri, 1544)

Camillo's philosophy and working method was based on the conviction that the sum total of all things – all material, every topic – as well as every word, was reducible to a number of finite elements. The *artificiosa rota*, with its seven spokes, worked on the idea of uniting literary opposites.[50] Material, or topics - ideas in literary form - were placed at each position on the spokes of the wheel, arranged in such a way that the reverse, or opposite, of a topic was placed on each opposing spoke, for example, 'arrival' and 'departure'.

In an account of memory games up to the seventeenth century, in which the name of Camillo figures prominently, Bolzoni describes how 'One [could] play with texts because they [could] be manipulated and visualized so as to make them, at the same time, easy to memorize and to reuse.'[51] It was thought that through playing with a text, deconstructing it, reassembling it, teasing and coaxing it into extremes, new patterns of language could evolve out of the old. The 'golden age' of language could provide the raw materials for a revival of the new. It was, says Bolzoni, *serio ludere,* or serious play. An outcome of the continuing fascination with the production of perfect rhetoric and literary style the games diced with artifice in the name of authenticity. They were the games that were to infuriate Erasmus and draw his vitriol in the *Ciceronianus.*

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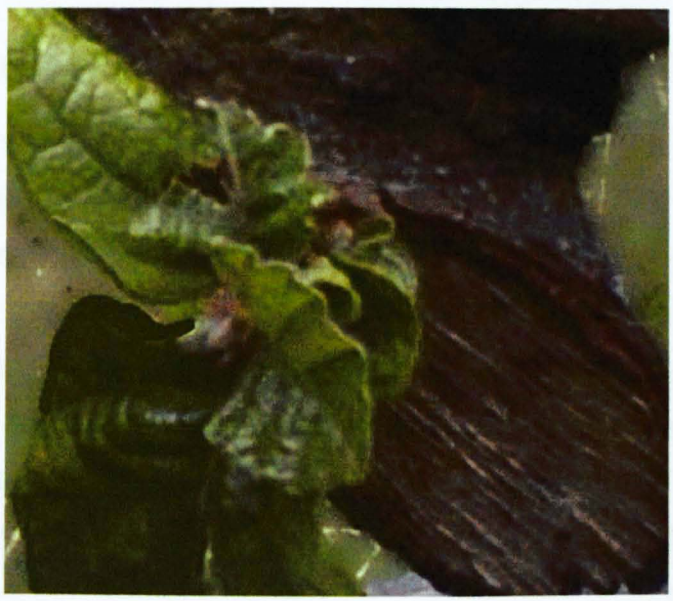
[50] The theory behind the *artificiosa rota* was probably also influenced by Nicolaus of Cusa, who had published his theories on the 'coincidence of all opposites in God' in *De Coniecturis,* c.1440. See Roob, Alexander, *Alchemy and Mysticism* (Cologne: Taschen, 1997), p.274.
[51] Bolzoni, *Gallery of Memory* p.126; also pp.83-129.

According to Camillo, it was inside the *gorgo dell'artificio*, at the centre of the imaginary wheel - in the whirlpool of artifice - that his rhetorical game was played. His simile of a whirlpool was not accidental. In the centre of the whirlpool there was space for the hidden and uncontrollable, a space for language, for the sign, to disintegrate and re-form. He thought that here opposites could be reconciled, material changed, transmutation made possible. All of Camillo's work was dedicated to the search for the *locus* of transformation. All signs, whether man-made or divine, were the material for this conversion. Art, as well as God's Book of Nature, were fair game. The *artificiosa rota* was a literary conversion; Camillo's *L'idea del Theatro,* on the other hand, was astronomical.

Chapter Two:

Camillo



...the Sun is simple and numerous are its rays and its effects

L'idea del Theatro, Giulio Camillo[52]

...the centre... is... the zone of the sacred, the zone of absolute reality...

The Myth of Eternal Return, Micea Eliade[53]

He was born in Friuli, in the north east of Italy, in around 1480. Sandwiched, from north to south, between the Alps and the Adriatic, and flanked from east to west, by Slovenia, and the Veneto, the region had been an important strategic centre since Roman times. From the 6th century it had been home to the Christian Patriarch of Aquileia, in constant conflict with Rome. In the early fifteenth century, after its defeat by the powerful Republic of Venice, it was famous for its mercury mines, its witches and its alchemy. Around the time of Camillo's birth it was in the throes of one of the earliest of the Peasant Revolts that were to ripple throughout the continent.

Biographical details of the early life of Camillo are sparse, and his biographers contradictory. He may have lived either in Portogruaro, or in Udine. Annotated manuscripts of his work are kept in the *Biblioteca Communal*, in Udine, which implies that this is the more likely of the two. He took his family name, Delminio, from the birthplace of his father, in Dalmatia, in what is now Croatia, and his life was spent in Italy, France and Switzerland. He had a public school education and studied philosophy and jurisprudence at the University of Padua. He was in Venice around the first decade of the sixteenth century, and lived near the house of Aldus Manutius, in the Sestière di San Polo.[54] He is believed to have held a chair of Dialectics at the University of Bologna from

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[52] *L'idea,* p.19.

[53] Eliade, Mircea, trans. Willard R. Trask, *The Myth of Eternal Return,* (London: Arkana, 1989), p.17.

[54] Incidentally, by the year 1500, Venice, where Camillo lived for much of his life, had as many as 417 printing houses. Venice is not a large town, and by my estimate that figure says that maybe around ten percent of the whole population was specifically devoted to developing this new medium.

around 1521 to 1525, and is known to have been one of the 'court of intellectuals'[55] at the Coronation of Charles V in 1529.

The Centre of Venice.

The Sestière di San Polo is highlighted in red, as well as the Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, discussed in Chapter Four.

From the earliest surviving letters, we know that also, during 1529, Camillo was planning his expedition to Paris to visit the King of France in company with Count, later Cardinal, Rangone and Girolamo Muzio. It is to Girolamo Muzio that we owe the existence of the manuscript version of *L'idea del Theatro,* as will soon become apparent. Muzio was later to write that during their journey to Paris, Camillo helped Count Rangone commit to memory, using his mnemotechnics, both the 'Miserere' which he learned in Latin and the 'Nunc Dimittis' which he memorized in the vernacular.[56]

On arrival in Paris, in 1530, Camillo so impressed Francis 1st with his proposals that he was given funds to develop his ideas on condition that he should not divulge his 'secret' to anyone else. Camillo remained true to this stipulation right up until the months before he died. Apart from a short period when he returned to Venice, Camillo remained in Paris until at least around

[55] De Luca, Elena, 'Silent Meanings: Emblems, Lay Culture and Political Awareness in Sixteenth Century Bologna' *Emblematica,* 12 (2002), 61-81.
[56] From an unpublished letter from Muzio to M. Domenico Tenieri, cited by Wenneker, p.19.

1537, or possibly later.[57] He made his name as an orator and wrote on principles of eloquence though these works were not published until later, circulating Paris in manuscript form. He appears to have been a man of some physical presence and to have made an impression in Paris. There is a story that one day, 'in a room with many gentlemen at some windows looking out over a garden,' Camillo was confronted with a lion that had escaped from its cage. 'Drawing near to him from behind, with its paws, [the lion] took [Camillo] without harm by the thighs, and with its tongue, proceeded to lick him.' '...That touch and...that breath, himself being overturned...all the others having fled'[58] appears to have had a profound effect on Camillo, and images of lions appear often in his writings. The lion story is corroborated by a number of sources and cannot have harmed Camillo's mystique.[59]

Eventually, though, remuneration from the King began to dry up and Camillo decided to return to Italy for good. During the latter part of 1543, or very early in 1544, he accepted an offer brokered by Girolamo Muzio to go to Milan. Here, in Milan, at the court of the Marchese del Vasto, after much persuasion, Camillo finally dictated his great idea to Muzio who transcribed all he said, over the course of seven days and nights. The manuscript was completed early in February 1544. Three months later, on the 15th of May, Camillo died.

Muzio and the Marchese del Vasto decided not to publish Camillo's manuscript, and *L'idea* languished. It was not until six years later that it was to receive a wider public, when the manuscript turned up in the hands of Antonio Cheluzzi da Colle. Da Colle put the manuscript in order, and *L'Idea del Theatro* was finally published in 1550, in Florence, by Lorenzo Torrentino.

So, what was in *L'Idea del Theatro*? What did it contain to convince Muzio and del Vasto to delay its publication, though they had gone to such lengths to attain the manuscript? Written in Italian, the book is arranged in seven sections that chart the creation of the world. Camillo speaks of a system that,

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[57] See Wenneker, p. 16-20. Yates suggests a later date, nearer to 1544.
[58] *L'idea*, p. 39.
[59] See Wenneker, p.39, n.2.

as he says, makes 'scholars into spectators'.[60] He is imagining a 'theatre' in its original sense – as a place in which a spectacle unfolds:

> Following the order of the creation of the world, we shall place on the first levels the more natural things...those we can imagine to have been created before all other things by divine decree. Then we shall arrange from level to level those that followed after, in such a way that in the seventh, that is, the last and highest level shall sit all the arts... not by reason of unworthiness, but by reason of chronology, since these were the last to have been found by men.

For Camillo, the world is in a constant state of change and flux. As I discuss further in Chapters Four and Five, the basis of his ideas was rooted in a version of what Mary Carruthers has called 'Aristotelian hylemorphism'. 'Hyle' is the material of all that is manifest; it is primary matter, or essence. Nicolaus of Cusa (1401-1464), described it as that which 'has no name...it is...Possibility or Being-able-to-develop or Underlying'.[61] Camillo believed that by reducing knowledge to its constituent parts, you could come closer to comprehending hyle, the original essence, and consequently understand what makes the universe tick. Likewise (but in the opposite direction) through comprehending the universe, you would understand its essential ingredients. His key to this was in the creation of a symbolic system that both represented the essence of material, as well as the relationships between the essences that allowed the universe to maintain its being. The 'idea of the Theatre' was fundamentally a structure of conceptual relationships rather than a building of wood or stone, and it is on that level that Camillo's work bears most fruit. The Theatre is to be understood in terms of time and space - a spatial representation of chronology - a clock of epochs.

The entire Theatre, says Camillo, rests on Solomon's Seven Pillars of Wisdom, out with which number 'nothing else can be imagined'. On the Seven Pillars rest the planets, which govern, or administrate, 'cause and effect'.

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[60] *L'idea,* p14.
[61] Nicolaus of Cusa, *Compendium,* quoted in Roob, p.175.

Camillo names these planets: the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Significantly, as I will discuss further in Chapter Six, Camillo omits the name of the Earth. Arranged in an ascending order from the planets, and affected by their influence, are a further six levels, which, broadly speaking, represent a gradual development from nature to art. They are named The Banquet, The Cave, The Gorgons, Pasiphae, The Sandals of Mercury ('I Talari'), and Prometheus. There is an inversion at the central part of the second and first levels between 'The Banquet' and 'The Sun', represented by 'Apollo', and Camillo makes it explicit that The Banquet and the Sun, here, are very important positions within the whole plan.

The naming of the levels in effect creates a kind of grid system to the whole plan. It is a grid system to enhance memory, and also to affect the interpretation of a given symbol or image – a kind of grid of meaning. But rather than a graph based on numeric values, the values in Camillo's scheme are based on language and myth. Camillo describes 'doorways' placed on each of the levels beneath which the scholar, or spectator, may view images to represent, and to remember, salient features of that position within the arrangement. I discuss the use of this grid of meaning further in Chapter Four, and look at the ways in which Camillo assumed the 'progressive interpretation' of an image at different positions within the schema. Using progressive interpretation, Camillo is able to use several images again and again, their meaning subtly altered by their position within the Theatre. Camillo describes around two hundred images all of which are evocative, intriguing and multi-layered. In Chapter Three I analyse two of them: the 'Elephant' and the 'Wolf, Lion and Dog'.

The Cave of Saturn...a wolf, a lion and a dog, 2001

According to the life written by Altani, Camillo had studied at the 'humanist cathedral' of Lazaro Bonamico,[62] and, though not explicitly acknowledged by Camillo, *L'idea* owes much to the writings of Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola and Lorenzo Valla.[63] In common with other philosophical/scientific authors of the period, Camillo backs up his theories by referring to Biblical and Classical sources,[64] notably Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura.*[65] More unusually, the whole work is also liberally peppered with references to Jewish Cabbalistic writings; Camillo, living in cosmopolitan Venice, clearly enjoyed intellectual commerce with his Jewish neighbours.[66] The highly complex system of the Cabbalah involves the analysis of the 'Sephiroth', or divine powers. There are a number of visual representations of this, all involving the theoretical arrangement of the Sephiroth in spatial relationships, which tend to branch out in tree-like formations. There is evidence, however, that Cabbalah was not a subject that was wholly to absorb Camillo, and that he later felt that the references to it in *L'idea* were more like spice than the meat of the work.[67]

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[62] Altani, pp. 244-245.

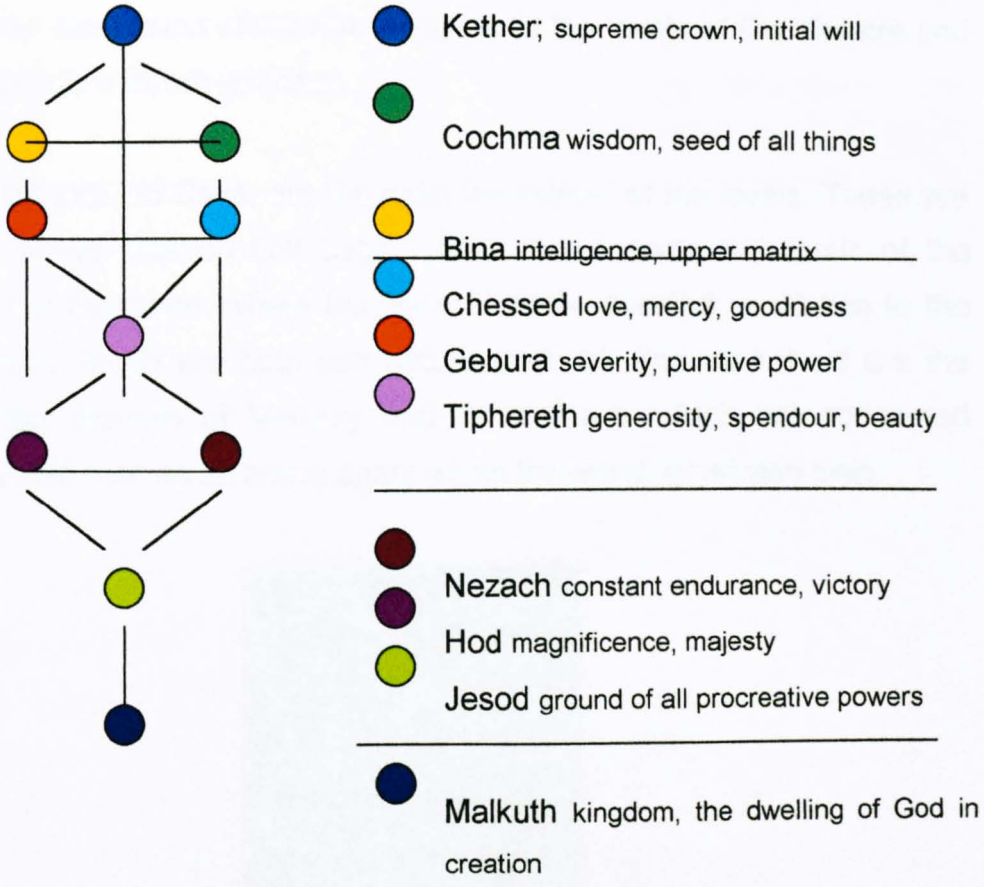
[63] On Ficino's *De Amore,* for example, Levi has said its 'prodigious 'influence' ...has often been catalogued, but it was too diffuse and all-permeating for any list.' (p.124), while the 'eclectic' Pico, who 'inspired Erasmus...combined a belief in magic and astrology with a belief in human liberty not dissimilar to Ficino's' (p.127) (Levi, Anthony, *Renaissance and Reformation,* (USA: Yale University Press, 2002). See Yates, for an appraisal of Camillo from a hermetic Neoplatonist standpoint, pp.129-172. See Bolzoni, *The Gallery of Memory,* for Camillo's educational influence within the Academy system, particularly the Accademia Veneziana, *passim.*

[64] Camillo's named sources, in order of appearance in *L'idea,* are as follows: Biblical scripture, (specifically, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Exodus, Apocalypse, Esdras, the Psalms, Numbers, Ezechiel, Proverbs, Isaiah, Hebrews, Romans, Galatians, Colossians, Acts, Thessalonians, Wisdom, Genesis, Canticles, Philippians); others, (numbers in brackets refer to page numbers): Malissus (7), Hermes Trismegistus (8, 10, 18, 20, 21, 38, 46, 51, 53), Ammonius Saccas (9), Vergil (10, 16, 32, 36, 49, 52, 52, 58, 61, 67, 74, 82), Maximus Tyrius (12), Cicero (12, 40, 59, 84), Aristotle (12, 18, 32, 58, 59, 83), Homer (17, 27, 29, 31, 40, 49), Plato (17, 21, 29, 41, 54, 57, 70, 79), Ramon Lull (18), Plotinus (19, 22, 23, 24, 58), Petrarch (19, 49, 65, 66, 74, 75) 'Pythagoreans' (18, 20, 21, 22), 'Platonists' (20, 26, 37, 50, 62, 67), Morienus (22), St. Augustine(24) 'Peripatetics' (25, 33), Gregory Nazianzus (30), Pliny (39, 45), Iamblichus (39), Lucretius (39), Origen (41, 55), Jerome (41, 55), Macrobius (46), Euripedes (52), Rabbi Simeon (53), St. Thomas (59), Simplicius (60), Landino (83), Boccaccio (84), Anaxagoras (31).

[65] *L'idea,* p. 39. The reference is to *De Rerum Natura,* 4. 710-35. Camillo also mentions Lucretius in *Trattato dell'Imitazione,* see Appendix I. Koyré says that the first reference to Lucretian cosmology was by Giordano Bruno. See Koyré, Alexander, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe,* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957), p.6.

[66] There had been a significant Jewish minority in Venice from the tenth century, while the first Jewish ghetto in Europe had been established in Venice around 1516.

[67] See Bolzoni, *Gallery of Memory,* p. 81.



An example of a Sephiroth Tree[68]

Camillo is not a political animal, though he does venture into some social commentary in *L'idea,* and I discuss this below. By vocation, he seems to be a metaphysically minded physician. *L'idea* is full of references to the body, and to its celestial correspondences, which I also discuss in this chapter. As I discuss in Chapter Six, the 'celestial streams' – or equivalence between the body and the heavens – was a very important part of Camillo's hypotheses. In Chapters Six and Seven, I will discuss the innermost level of the Theatre, where the planets are positioned. In this chapter, however, I will begin by

[68] The upper triad is formed by *Kether*, will, *Cochma*, wisdom, and *Bina*, intelligence. This is the triad 'beyond understanding'. Below this, *Chessed*, love, mercy and goodness, is balanced by *Gebura*, severity and punitive power. *Gebura* and *Chessed* are harmonised through *Tiphereth*, generosity, splendour and beauty. From these, flow *Nezach*, endurance, victory, *Hod*, magnificence and majesty and *Jesod*, the ground of all procreative powers. From all of these is made manifest *Malkuth*, the kingdom, the dwelling of God in creation. The relationships between each of the Sephiroth are subtle and dynamic and to be understood in terms of movement, with each matrix affecting the others. There are countless other variations of the tree, of profound complexity, and there are many levels on which the tree can be understood. Roob, p.310.

giving a brief description of the remaining six of the levels of the Theatre and discuss a possible layout for these.

The Banquet and the Cave, are the most 'elemental' of the levels. These are the levels where creation first began. After these, come the levels of the Gorgons, and Pasiphae, where the 'inner' man is revealed in relation to the cosmos; these levels are both part nature, part art. And then there are the levels of the Sandals of Mercury and Prometheus, which are concerned specifically with man as an active agent within the world, or art and man.

Proteus, at the level of the Banquet, 2001

Proteus of many shapes...signifies primary matter, which was the second creation....wherein shall be discussed...Chaos...[69]

The Banquet

The Banquet is where the essential productions of God originate. There are two essential productions, 'one from within the essence of His divinity, and the other from without'.[70] The production from within is 'consubstantial...coessential and eternal': this is the 'Word' of God. The production from without is made 'of nothing...in time'. This is primary matter, which some call Chaos, others: Proteus, others: the world soul. Camillo gives the analogy of 'a mass of unworked wool',[71] from which a cap, a cloak and hose might be formed, to suggest the initial amorphous nature of primary matter.[72]

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[69] *L'idea,* p.25.
[70] *Ibid.,* p.17.
[71] *Ibid.,* p.18.
[72] He is also discussing here, the undifferentiated nature of the Heavens and the earth.

At the level of the Banquet, the 'Elements' are most 'simple'; they have not yet been 'mixed'. Camillo says that it is the Spirit of Christ that is responsible for the union of the Elements into new forms. Without the Spirit of Christ 'opposites would never be in harmony', and the 'hidden seed of plants and flowers' would not 'unfold'.[73]

The eternity of the species is established in the Banquet:

> ...species remain eternal, while the individuals are transitory and mortal. Therefore, although the individuals transform themselves and deteriorate or conceal themselves, nevertheless the species and the eternal Ideas live on....[74]

The 'Ideas' are the 'forms and exemplars of essential things in the eternal mind...whence all things created drew their being'. They bare 'as from seals' the impression of God. The heavens and the earth are 'continually under the wheel...of 'manifestation' and 'concealment''. Birth and death are illusions; there is only consciousness and oblivion. Quoting from the Pimander of Hermes Trismegistus Camillo says 'all the things of which every living creature is composed...are immortal.'[75]

He goes on to discuss the 'Gamone' of the Pythagoreans, a system based on light, heat and generation (see Appendix IV for further details), and explains that the nature of primary matter is 'watery'.[76] He declares that water is the 'heat' of the Holy Spirit and the 'measure of the Son'.[77]

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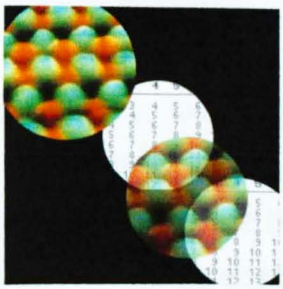
[73] *L'idea*, p.20.
[74] *Ibid.*, p.25
[75] *Ibid.*, p.18.
[76] *Ibid.*, p.21.
[77] *Ibid.*, p.23.



Atoms at the level of the Cave, 2001

Atoms shall indicate...discriminate quantity[78]

The Cave

The Cave is the third level of the Theatre, in which 'according to the nature of its planet...[are kept] the compounds and elements pertaining to it'. [79] Again Camillo talks at length about the power of the Spirit of Christ reconciling opposites, and allowing the earth to be fruitful. The Cave separates the supercelestial from the celestial, so that the influx of the 'supercelestial streams' (sopracelesti ruscelli) does not 'rain more than might be suitable for the capacity of matter'.[80] Camillo distinguishes between a Platonic and Homeric Cave, saying that the Cave that he describes is specifically Homeric. The Platonic Cave is where protagonists watch the projection of images of the world rather than witnessing the real thing. The Homeric Cave, according to Camillo is where transformation takes place, the transformation of 'weavings and manufacturings' like bees making honey and nymphs weaving cloth.

A girl at the level of the Gorgons, 2001

... a young girl ascending through Capricorn...shall indicate the ascent of the soul into Heaven[81]

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[78] *Ibid.*, p.34.
[79] *Ibid.*, p.29.
[80] *Ibid.*, p.30.
[81] *Ibid.*, p.66.

The Gorgons

The three sisters, named the Gorgons, were Medusa, and immortal Stheino and Euryale. Serpent haired, the sisters lived in an inaccessible crag, and had the power of turning their foes into stone, just by looking at them. The hero, Perseus, assisted by magical sandals that enabled him to fly, a helmet that made him invisible, and a mirror, managed to decapitate Medusa, and threw her head into a bag. From the stump of Medusa's neck sprang Pegasus, the flying horse, and Chryasor, a warrior with a golden sword. The head of Medusa became the boss on Athena's shield.

The level of the Gorgons is the first to relate to man. Specifically it relates to the 'inner man'. Camillo says that 'it should be indicated that most of [the] times when the Scriptures mention man, they mean only inner man'.[82] The external man is clothed with skin and flesh, bones and sinews, while the inner man is the image of the divine. The inner man was made by God at an early stage, before the earthly body, in the Supercelestial region. He was formed from the 'slime' ('limo') of the earth. This is not a pejorative term, says Camillo, but signifies 'the flower, and...cream of the earth, which was virginal'. This virginal earth is equated with the name of 'Adema, whence Adam drew his name'.[83] Speaking of Adam before he sinned, Camillo goes on to talk about the 'garden of delights' ('horto delle delitie'). He says that Adam was 'in the supercelestial garden, not in person, but in the grace of God, rejoicing in all the blessed influences'.

Following the Cabbalists, Camillo says that man has three souls: the Nephes, the Ruach and the Nessamah. The Nephes is like a 'shadow', and can be tempted by demons; the Nessamah is closer to the angels and God; 'The poor creature in the middle is goaded by both parts'.[84] The 'inner man' also has three intellects: 'intelligence' which is innate; 'practical intellect' which can be learned; and the 'active intellect', which is the 'power through which we

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[82] *Ibid.*, p.54.
[83] *Ibid.*, p.55. He adds that Christ's body was made of this 'virginal earth and of the most pure blood of the Virgin Mary'.
[84] *Ibid.*, p.57.

understand'. The 'active intellect' or divine ray is outside us, and under the authority of God'.[85]

He has chosen the symbol of the Gorgons because according to the myth, the sisters 'only had one eye between them which was commutable, since the one was able to lend it to another...'.[86] This relates to the three souls and the three intellects of man, and 'causes us to understand the divine ray to be without and not within ourselves'.

Pasiphae and the Bull, 2001

Pasipae...in love with the bull...signifies the soul which...falls into covetousness of the body[87]

Pasiphae

The myth of Pasiphae and the bull pertains 'not only to the inner man, but...also...the exterior'. I would like to give the myth of Pasiphae, here, as it is particularly significant in terms of a number of its motifs. According to the myth, the father of Pasiphae was Helios, the Sun. Pasiphae married Minos, the King of Crete. Minos had promised to sacrifice a white bull that appeared from the sea, sent by Poseidon. But when Minos saw the beauty of the bull, he substituted another in its place, and kept the white bull from the sea, in his palace. In revenge at Minos's deception, Poseidon caused Pasiphae to lust after the bull. She forced Daedulus to make the hollow body of an artificial cow, in which she hid herself, to enrapture the bull. The Minotaur was born from their union, subsequently hidden away from human sight in the depths of

[85] *Ibid.*, p.59.
[86] *Ibid.*, p.62.
[87] *Ibid.*, p.67.

the labyrinth. (The sun features again in the story of Daedulus who had built the labyrinth itself under the orders of Minos, and lived here, out of reach of the Minotaur, with his son, Icarus. By constructing wings from feathers and wax, Daedulus and Icarus escaped from the maze. But the heat from the sun melted the wax of the wings of Icarus and he fell into the sea.).

The myth of Pasiphae and the Bull was a popular subject for paintings and proto-emblematic work, e.g. Christine de Pisan's *Epistre Othea*.[88] According to Camillo, Pasiphae 'signifies the soul...[falling] into covetousness of the body.' Quoting from the Psalms, 'Who maketh thy angels spirits, and thy ministers a burning fire',[89] he equates the supercelestial world with fire, while the world below is airy. The simulated cow designed by Daedulus 'stands for the simulated airy body.' The union of a 'thing so pure' (soul) with 'a thing so gross' (body) is made possible by this imitation-mediator.[90] He equates the myth with Platonic philosophy, and describes how in the upper regions, in the supercelestial world, the soul needs a 'fiery vehicle' in which to move its ethereal body, 'because one does not move a thing unless by means of a body'. As the soul descends to the lower regions, and is 'provided with the earthly vehicle in the maternal womb', it changes from fire to air. He interprets Virgil, saying that when 'sinful souls' are 'freed from the earthly vehicle' they are not freed from the air. Therefore they must go to a place of 'cleansing, where they reside until they are free from the airy vehicle and are returned to pure fire, in which they ascend to the holy place.'[91]

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[88] Composed in the early fifteenth century. See Russell, Daniel, *Emblematic Structures in Renaissance French Culture*, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1995), pp.31-37.
[89] Psalm 103 (4): v. 4.
[90] This image re-iterates Camillo's ideas regarding the use of imitation in the creation of the 'perfect style'. See Chapter Three and Appendix I: 'On Imitation'.
[91] *L'idea*, p. 67.

The winged sandals of Mercury, 2001

...the operations...which man can perform naturally and without any art...[92]

The Sandals of Mercury

Cunning, eloquent and persuasive, Mercury had a propensity for lies. A precocious child, he had stolen a herd of cows when he was still in swaddling clothes but was forgiven because he charmed his detractors with music. In return for becoming the messenger of the Gods, Mercury promised never again to tell a lie, though he said he could not promise 'always to tell the whole truth'. His winged sandals enable him to move as quickly as air. He also carries a herald's staff and a round hat against the rain. He gave the gift of fire to the Gods, as well as the alphabet, astronomy, the musical scale, boxing, gymnastics, and the cultivation of the olive tree. He fathered Hermaphroditus with the Goddess of Love.

The level of the Sandals of Mercury represents 'all of the operations...which man can perform naturally and without any art.' This includes, for example, images to represent 'the midwife who delivers children and the office of washing them'; 'giving or receiving business'; 'supplying, investigating...industry'; 'purging and cleansing'; 'making beautiful'; 'enjoying oneself, rejoicing, laughing, making laugh, comforting, making merry'; 'giving oneself airs'; 'dissimulation, cunning or deceit'; 'vigor or strength, or in truth to work towards the truth'.

[92] *Ibid.*, p. 76.

Vulcan at the level of Prometheus, 2001
Vulcan shall give us the blacksmith's craft of fire.[93]

Prometheus

Prometheus, the son of a Titan, was the creator of mankind. Athena had taught him architecture, astronomy, mathematics, navigation, medecine and metallurgy. There was once a dispute as to which parts of a sacrificial bull should be reserved for the gods, and which should be given to men. Prometheus was the arbiter. He flayed and jointed a bull, putting the bones in one bag and the flesh in another. He hid the bag of bones under a layer of tempting fat, and made the bag of flesh look unappealing, and offered each to Zeus. Zeus, tricked, chose the bag of bones; he punished Prometheus by withholding from mankind the knowledge of fire. 'Prometheus at once went to Athene, with a plea for a backstairs admittance to Olympus, and this she granted. On his arrival, he lighted a torch at the fiery chariot of the Sun and presently broke from it a fragment of glowing charcoal, which he thrust into the pithy hollow of a giant fennel-stalk. Then extinguishing his torch, he stole away...'[94] and gave the gift of fire to man.

The seventh level is 'assigned to all the arts, noble as well as vile'.[95] Camillo quotes the story of Prometheus and Epimetheus and their distribution of gifts to the animals, from Plato's *Protagorus*.[96] Epimetheus distributed gifts to all the animals, but forgot about man. Prometheus secretly stole, with fire, the knowledge of skill in the arts. However, 'political wisdom' was still in the

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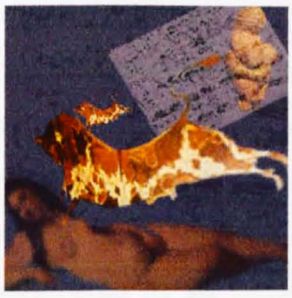
[93] *Ibid.*, p.85.
[94] Graves, Robert, *The Greek Myths Vols 1 & 2*, (London: Penguin, 1960), p.144.
[95] *L'idea*, p. 79.
[96] *Ibid.*, pp. 79- 81.

keeping of Jupiter, who 'finally moved to pity by human unhappiness, sent Mercury who was to take to men respect for others and a sense of justice'. Camillo says that for this reason, this level not only represents the arts 'but also political and martial powers'.

The Body

Scattered throughout *L'idea* are references to the body. The earlier version of the work, *Il gran theatro delle scienze* is believed to have been based on a metaphorical map of the body, rather than the cosmos. Medieval medicinal practices routinely connected the assumed attributes of particular planets to areas of the body, e.g. the feet were associated with Jupiter, the head and genitals with Mars. Camillo makes some moderate changes to this scheme. He suggests, for example, that while the head is associated with war-like Mars, 'the hair, beard, all the skin of the body and also the brain',[97] due to their qualities of 'attraction' and 'dampness' should be consigned to the Moon. This anticipates Camillo's discussion of the action of 'celestial streams', connecting the supercelestial and celestial regions in which the hair, beard and skin are the human conduits of heavenly power.



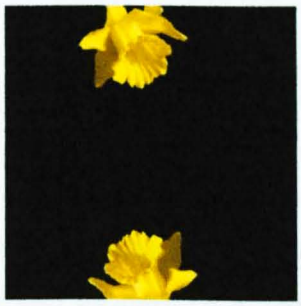
Pasiphae at the level of Venus, 2001

Cerberus at the level of the Cave, 2001

At the Venus/Cave conjunction, there is the image, among other things, of a three headed Cerberus. Camillo explains that the animal is three-headed 'to symbolize the three natural necessities, which are eating, drinking and sleeping'. He says that these necessities 'hinder man from his meditation' and

[97] *Ibid.*, p.69.

describes the story of Aeneas who, 'wishing to pass to the contemplation of lofty things' threw to Cerberus a mouthful of food; Camillo interprets the story to mean that 'if we wish to have time to contemplate' we must satisfy our three bodily necessities 'with little'.[98] However the images of the bodily necessities are given to Venus because of the 'pleasure' associated with them. The same image at Prometheus, for example, 'will stand for cooking delicious feasts and the delights suitable to sleep'. Scents, and cleanliness are to be found at the level of Venus, as well as 'natural and desirable' beauty, represented by Narcissus.



Narcissus at the level of the Cave, 2001

Eurydice at the level of the Gorgons, 2001

Camillo talks about the significance of feet as relating to the emotions. Different parts of the foot relate to subtly different emotional states. Under the Gorgons of Venus, for example, an image of Eurydice bitten on the heel by a serpent, 'signifies our emotions governed by our will'.[99] Under the Gorgons of Mars, the figure of a young girl with a bare foot indicates 'a decision, or a purpose which is rigid and born suddenly'.[100] He mentions the myth of Achilles, who having been immersed in the Stygian waters, 'became invulnerable in all parts except in the feet,' which he interprets as meaning that he was 'able to be faithful in all parts provided that he was not touched in his emotions.' Camillo equates the washing of the Disciples' feet by Christ, as

[98] *Ibid.*, p.36.
[99] *Ibid.*, p.63.
[100] *Ibid.*, p.64.

a washing of their emotions: 'He...washed the feet at his departure, that is, the emotions of his Apostles'.[101]

The Inner and the Outer Man correspond to each other through a system of 'vital equivalence', also discussed further in Chapter Six. The 'inner man' has three parts, which, following Cabbalistic thought, Camillo names the Nephes, the Ruach and the Nessamah, mentioned earlier. Camillo also talks of three intellects of the interior man: 'intelligence' which is innate; 'practical intellect' which can be learned; and the 'active intellect', which is the 'power through which we understand'.

Social Comment

Although Camillo is not a politically minded man, he is openly critical, in *L'idea,* of aspects of the clergy and the army, censuring both for their supposed idolatry of a 'new god'. Quoting from the Psalms, 'Israel, if thou wilt hear me, thou shalt not adore strange gods, nor shall there be a new god in thee,'[102] he says that this relates to 'two most serious sins'.[103] One is of not worshipping God 'truly and only'. The other is even worse, and this is of adoring the gods 'which we ourselves make within us'.[104] For example, he says, 'many of those hallowed heads within monasteries have made within themselves an idol of their continence and chastity'. And not only do they worship it, but they would like it to be worshipped by others; so 'they have raised within their imagination a Vestal goddess'. He goes on to say that 'the most learned have raised a Pallas, which not only they worship, but they would also like it to be esteemed and revered by all.' In true Camillan fashion, he turns on its head the usual objections to priestly incontinence, in favour of chastising them for chastity. The army, likewise, comes in for severe words. 'The princes of the army,' he says, 'have raised in their heart the deity of Mars. Nor do they only esteem and worship it, but they would like all to bow to

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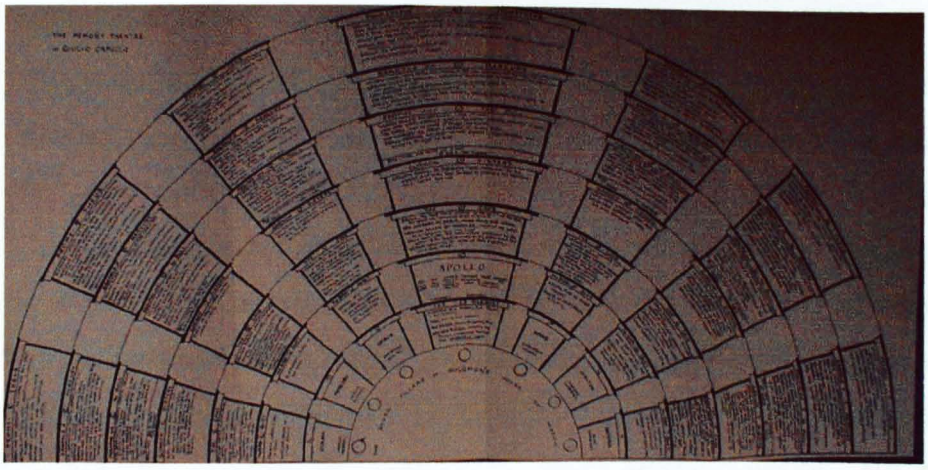
[101] *Ibid.*, p.63.
[102] Psalm 80 (81): v.9-10.
[103] *L'idea,* p.72.
[104] *Ibid.*, p.73.

it.' He is unspecific about which particular princes it is with whom he takes issue: having by 1545, spent time in Italy, France and Switzerland, the armies could be in any of these. It is unusual of him to make such a specific political comment – he usually steers clear of temporal matters, and he quickly qualifies his statement by generalizing on the moral nature of ambition. 'To speak briefly, ' he says, 'we all have within, a bold and proud lion, which symbolizes our wicked and untamed ambition....it is the new god which we have within us.' If we wish to have a spirit strong as Hercules, we must 'kill this lion.' Humility, he says, will follow.

Hercules and the lion, 2001

The Arrangement

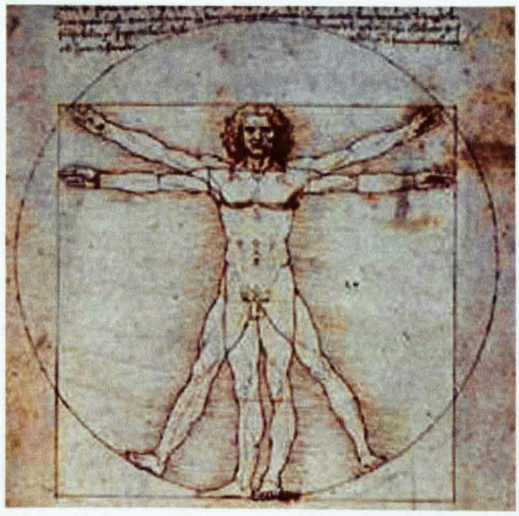
On reading *L'idea,* it is not easy to imagine what arrangement Camillo had in mind. Although he is clear that there are seven levels to the Theatre, his references to exactly *where* in the schema specific images are to be inserted, at least on a cursory inspection, seem quite chaotic. Frances Yates's version of the layout is based on a Vitruvian grid, illustrated below:



The Theatre according to Yates[105]

Yates divides the Theatre with six 'gangways' between the seven distinct grades of the Theatre itself. In the innermost section she plots seven circles to represent Solomon's seven pillars of wisdom. In evenly spaced boxes, she places descriptions of Camillo's imagery.

The ten books that formed Vetruvius's *De Architectura* had been rediscovered and translated into Italian by 1520,[106] inspiring Italian architects and artists from Alberti to Palladio. Da Vinci's 'Vitruvian Man' exemplifies the Golden Section, or 'divine proportions' of man.

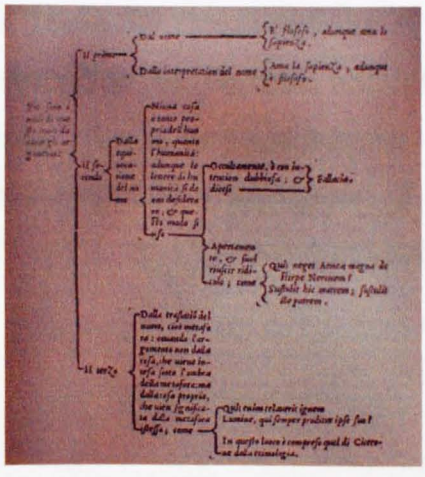


Da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man*

[105] Yates, pull-out section. See also Yates, pp.170-172.
[106] A copy of the ancient Roman text (c.90-20 BC) was found in a monastic library in Switzerland by Poggio Braciolini. Printed editions appeared from 1486; the first illustrated edition in 1511.

Camillo himself makes much of the idea of the use of the body as a map of divine correspondences, and I wonder whether he may have been aware of da Vinci's philosophy. However, Camillo's Theatre is not as ordered and evenly proportioned, as either a Vitruvian theatre, or the 'Vitruvian Man'. While *L'idea* is divided into seven sections, each section itself divided again by seven further divisions, the number of descriptions of imagery at each level in Camillo's plan is uneven. Every section of the Theatre contains descriptions of images – but the number of images for each section varies. No section contains more than seven images, but some can contain as few as one image. This unevenness is missing in Yates's picture of the Theatre.

Lina Bolzoni has recently discussed the practice of using mnemonic *trees* at the Accademia Veneziana. Founded in 1557, and dedicated to the encyclopedic organization and publication of knowledge, the Academy's editorial programme had been greatly influenced by Camillo, amongst others.[107] Mnemonic *trees,* as illustrated below, were advocated by the Academy as a visual means of the organization of data. Rhetorical in origin, the *trees* were similar to the *artificiosa rota,* discussed in the previous chapter, as a method of systematizing words and ideas, of making *material* visually memorable and diagrammatic.



A *tree* from Rudolf Agricola's *Della inventione dialettica,* (Venice: Giovanni Bariletto, 1567)[108]

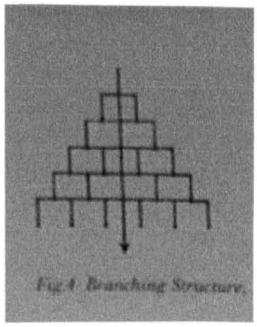
[107] Bolzoni, *Gallery of Memory,* p.12. See also pp. 23-82.
[108] *Ibid.*, p.15.

A mnemonic *tree* will begin with certain basic premises or ideas, which are then developed in branching structures. From a visual perspective, the *trees* are organic, rather than uniform, in shape. Though they have an internal logic, they are, to a certain extent, non-systematic in terms of the ever-increasing division of knowledge and ideas within the structure as a whole. Some ideas will, literally, be more fruitful than others, leading to a greater yield of further concepts.

The lists of images in Camillo's *L'idea* reads, in many ways like a mnemonic *tree.* An important 'stem' image, for example, a planet, will lead to further images that branch from it. The branching images are no less important, or significant than, the stem image, but they have less structural power within the general scheme. The stem images, like the basic principles within a mnemonic *tree* are the tenets on which the rest of the imagery/ideas are fundamentally based. I will discuss this phenomenon further in Chapter Four, and look at the way that Camillo uses an image, with this technique, to develop a theme and to imbue the images with a sense of progressive interpretation. Now, however, I will look at the overall shape of the Theatre, as I believe that Camillo understood it. The mnemonic *tree* structure is important in understanding the shape of the Theatre, but it does not give the full picture.

In Bill Viola's essay *Will There Be Condiminiums in Data Space?* (written in 1983), in which he mentions Camillo, he talks about the visual representation of 'data structures'. Viola shows three diagrams that exemplify different approaches to the organization and visualization of a collection of data. He terms the first, illustrated below, as a 'branching structure.'[109]

[109] Viola, Bill, *Reasons for Knocking at an Empty House,* (USA: The MIT Press in association with the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, London, 1995), p. 107.

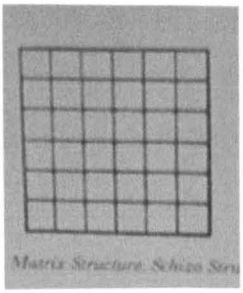


Branching Structure[110]

Borrowed from the terminology of computer science, and used in interactive videodiscs, Viola discusses the idea of a branching structure, saying that the viewer 'proceeds from top to bottom in time'.[111] He or she may 'stop at predetermined branching points along the way and go off into related material'. He gives the analogy of an interactive video tour of the desert, in which the viewer can stop to look at plants, and the 'various flora of the valley floor'. But despite this system's interactivity, basically, for Viola, it is 'still the same old linear logic system in a new bottle'.[112]

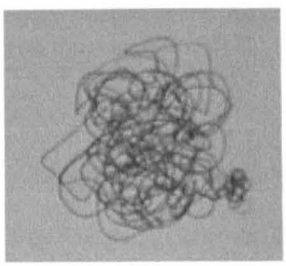
Viola offers new models for structuring data. He calls one a 'Matrix Structure.' This, he says, is a 'non-linear array of information', in which the viewer/protagonist 'could enter at any point, move in any direction, at any speed, pop in and out at any place.' In this structure, 'All directions are equal.' Exploring the data would be the same as exploring a territory, moving in 'data space', in '*idea* space'. This, he says, would be the 'next evolutionary step'; after 'the first TV camera with VTR gave us an eye connected to a gross form of non-selective memory', the Matrix Structure would be the 'area of intelligent perception and thought structures, albeit artificial.'

[110] *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[111] *Ibid.*, p.107.
[112] *Ibid.*, p.108.



Matrix Structure

Finally, Viola envisions a 'schizo', or 'spaghetti' model. This is to be mapped from the 'psychological and neurological depths' of the 'tormented artist [of] the West.'[113] In this model, 'not only are all directions equal, but all are not equal. Everything is irrelevant and significant at the same time.' A schizoid labyrinth, 'Viewers may become lost in this structure and never find their way out.'



Schizo Structure

There is a large measure of humour in Viola's conception of data maps (that is to say, they should be taken with a dose of salt). I don't think he means us to take romantic notions of the 'tormented artist' seriously. But he speaks with prescience, and his categorizations of data space help to elucidate Camillo's *L'idea*. There are clear parallels between Viola's 'branching structure' and the Accademia Veneziana's mnemonic *trees*. Both enable the visualization of the 'branching out' of data from a basic premise. While Viola dismisses the 'branching structure' as 'the same old linear logic system in a new bottle,' he is, here, talking specifically about the branching structure of a videodisc. In this structure, in which a predetermined quantity of information is accessed in succession (however circuitous this route may be), there is, literally, 'no going back' – once the data has been gleaned, once the story is told, there is

[113] *Ibid.*, p.108-109.

nowhere else to go. It is the linear quality of access to information in this structure with which Viola takes issue. In the 'Matrix Structure' and the 'Schizo Structure', however, the sequential element to data retrieval has been abandoned.

The Matrix Structure, according to Viola, allows the viewer/protagonist to move back and forth in time and space. Although Viola is not explicit about it, perhaps we can suppose that by this he means there to be a multi-dimensional element to his plan of the Structure. The Matrix should not be understood as a two dimensional square grid on a flat surface, but a three or four-dimensional unit existing in space/time. Within this system there is a greater degree of choice for theoretical movement. Nevertheless even though the number of choices is greatly increased, they are still confined within the grid; although there is more freedom in the Matrix Structure, it is circumscribed.

The Schizo Structure, like the Matrix, also allows for more freedom of spatial and temporal movement. Unlike the Matrix, however, it is not based on a pre-ordered grid, but is like a labyrinth or maze. There is an emotive element to Viola's description of the Schizo structure. It can either be seen as a place of mystery - plumbed from the 'depths' of his 'neurosis' - a labyrinth of the Minotaur - or it can likewise be viewed as being as consequential as a muddle of spaghetti on a plate. This is the most 'open-minded' structure, and the most unstable. And to an extent, it depends not so much on first-person experience, but on third-person analysis for its level of meaning. It is lunatic or it is spaghetti-like. It is either ambiguous and intriguing or inconsequential though wholesome.

L'idea del Theatro has elements of all of the structures described above. As mentioned earlier, it has a fundamental order based on the number seven (the Seven Pillars of Wisdom). This basic order, like Viola's Matrix Structure, is multi-dimensional and exists within space/time. As I later discuss, the essential order of the Theatre is cosmological, and it is within this setting that the rest of the Theatre's imagery should be understood. From this underlying

order, images/ideas branch out. The image/ideas themselves are evocative and associative; they aim to trigger lateral thought. Possibilities for interpretation are vastly increased, as is the capacity for alternative readings dependent on the relative position of an image within the overall schema (see Chapter Four for more discussion on this). Based on the multi-dimensional branching structure of *L'idea* in which a potentially infinite array of information is in a process of constant change, I would like to offer yet another visual metaphor, here, drawing on Viola's lead. The mapping of thought processes in the brain is, for me, the closest visual correlative to the conceptual method of Camillo.

Idea patterns[114]

The organic, branching patterns of a neurological map bare the closest resemblance to Camillo's 'idea'. The multi-dimensional element to an image of the mind comes closest to Camillo's theoretical spatial arrangement. His divisions of imagery tend to proliferate in an uncultivated way. His data 'trees' reproduce from stems that are based in basic principles, which, let loose, multiply, connect, and re-connect. The map of the mind also relates to the concept of 'celestial streams' with which a great deal of *L'idea* is concerned, which I discuss further in Chapter Six. 'Celestial streams' connect the heavenly and the earthly, the divine and the human, in a vital and reciprocal relationship of correspondence.

Even though Camillo is at pains to tell us that *L'idea* is about 'the eternal nature' of things, in fact there is a sense of temporality and transience to his

[114] Image from cover of Rhodes, Neil, & Sawday, Jonathan, *The Renaissance Computer* (London: Routledge, 2000).

prose. Having dictated *L'idea* to Muzio, you get the impression that Camillo divines some of the imagery *ex tempore.* This is not to say that the imagery is random or off-the-cuff; it is all considered. You feel that Camillo has thought about the imagery, held it in his memory, seen it all in his mind's eye, for years. The images are stored, latent, inside him. And yet, as he gives words to the idea, for Muzio, there is immediacy about it. Like a stand-up comedian making it up as he goes along to please his audience, Camillo has something of a wild man in him. This improvisational quality can occasionally seem disorderly. It sets him apart from da Vinci's 'Vitruvian Man'. The reflection of the divine in Camillo is of a very idiosyncratic god.

To return again to Yates's description of the Theatre, one of the unusual, and important, aspects of her interpretation was that it reversed the typical relationship between subject and object. The object, or the 'perceived', i.e. visual imagery, was positioned in Yates's 'auditorium'. The subject, or 'perceiver', was positioned on the 'stage'. This is one reason why Camillo's work exemplifies so well Yates's theories of memory: the 'perceiver' would have a vast array of visual data from which to glean information. As I discuss in Chapter Four, this essentially passive relationship between perceiver and perceived is not what I think Camillo had in mind. Despite this, however, Yates's inversion of subject and object points to an inherently reflexive, subjective element of Camillo's work that cannot be ignored. There are two aspects to this. One is the subjectivity of the perceiver in terms of his place within the Theatre, and one is the subjectivity that is intrinsic to the visual experience.

The position of the subject, or perceiver, within the overall plan of Camillo's Theatre, is critical. It is from this position that everything else is witnessed. The entire pantheon is viewed from this spot. This is the centre of the subject. This is 'Me', the place of 'absolute reality'.[115] Eliade and others have discussed how from ancient times, the sacred centre was the meeting place of heaven, earth and hell. As a mandala, or cosmographic representation, it

[115] Eliade, Mircea, trans. Willard R. Trask, *The Myth of Eternal Return,* (London: Arkana, 1989), p.17.

was in the centre, that the universe was 'reproduce[d]... in its essence'.[116] From an architectural perspective, the centre of the sanctuary or temple, as the *imago mundi*, was the place of greatest significance. Inside Camillo's Theatre, the position of the centre is the place from which the network of visual relationships that surround it is to be understood. The subjectivity of this position is so absolute as to be omniscient, although, paradoxically, it is held in being by the very objects that it, itself, circumscribes.[117] I will discuss the relationship of the place of the centre to the rest of Camillo's Theatre further in Chapter Seven.

The subjectivity intrinsic to the visual experience is difficult to quantify. In Camillo's *L'idea,* where the information field is encoded in complex visual signs, the meaning is, to an extent, dependent on subjective interpretation. While all information is dependent on context, the nature of visual information in particular is reliant on the frame. Even if a number of his contemporaries would have had far greater access than is available now to some of the mythological and philosophical allusions to which Camillo refers, the reliance on an emotive response to visual and mythic stimuli, to a degree, precludes an objective analysis. The myth of Pasiphae, for example, is hardly the 'Eastenders' of the moment. We can never fully appreciate what Camillo may have meant by referring to Pasiphae, either from the mythic or the visual point of view. Nevertheless, I do not think we should censure him for presenting his message in a visual way. On the contrary, this is an area in which Camillo was, I think, visionary.

He knew the importance of the image, understood that it was possible to use images to present complex information. Not only this, but he envisaged a multi-dimensional, networked environment in which this would occur. While I am not going to suggest that Camillo foresaw the age of the internet, nevertheless he valued the image in a way that was markedly more prescient

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[116] Eliade, p.18. See also Szőnyi, György E., 'Architectural Symbolism and Fantasy Landscapes in Alchemical and Occult Discourse: Revelatory Images' in *Emblems & Alchemy,* Vol. 3 (Glasgow: Glasgow Emblem Studies, 1998), pp.49-69.

[117] The relationship of the centre to the circumference of the centre, implicit in Camillo's *L'idea,* owes much to Nicolaus of Cusa. See, for example, Koyre pp.12-13.

and acute than his erudite and seemingly rational adversary, Desiderius Erasmus, the turbulent relationship with whom I shall examine in the next chapter.

Chapter Three:

Fame with Tongue

(Lingua verius quam calamo celebrem)

Or,

The Gift of the Gab

1431: Lorenzo Valla writes: Philosophy 'is like a soldier or a tribune under the command of oratory, the queen', *De Voluptate*

1469: Desiderius Erasmus born

1480: Giulio Camillo born

1488: Erasmus begins work on *Antibarbari*

1500: *Adages* first published

1506-9: Erasmus in Italy; meets Camillo, among others; Good Friday Speech, Rome (1509)

1516: Publication of Erasmus's translation of the New Testament

1520: *Antibarbari* published

1527: Erasmus's letter to Vergara regarding the paganism of the 'Ciceronians'

1528: Publication of *Ciceronianus*

1530: Camillo meets King of France who gives him funds for the Theatre

1531-2: Zwichem's letters to Erasmus regarding Camillo – these are read and kept by Erasmus's secretary Gilbertus Cognatus; Camillo's *Trattato dell'Imitazione* circulates Paris and Padua in manuscript

1535: Erasmus's letter to Johann Coler in which Camillo is mentioned

Erasmus's *Adages*, first published in 1500, was a pan-European best seller. A collection of common sayings and proverbs, with explanatory notes, Erasmus culled his Greek and Latin sources, helping to immortalize such sayings as 'Know thyself', 'Put the cart before the horse', 'To be in the same boat' and 'To give someone the finger'. Some of the weightier adages, such as 'War is sweet to those who have not tried it', 'The Labours of Hercules' and 'The Sileni of Alcibiades', stimulated explanatory texts which ran to many pages in length and were published as separate pamphlets.

Erasmus revised and added to the *Adages* until it ran to over four thousand examples.[118] A handbook on how to flesh out your Latin prose with a meaty axiom, the *Adages,* like Erasmus's highly influential *De Copia,* became the standard work on how to achieve an 'abundance' of style. Often printed on cheap paper in numerous pocket-sized editions, it was handy, affordable, and it had a practical use. It helped you to look knowledgeable and in vogue, and added to that, as anyone who was anyone had a copy, and not to mention the fact that it went through so many changes and re-editions, it was a source of endless interest and gossip.

Commentator, critic, author, wit and philologist, Erasmus was waspish, broad-ranging, curious, defensive, brilliant, restless and edgy. Born in Deventer, in the Netherlands, in 1469,[119] he refused to be hedged in; despite offers of remuneration and hospitality from Kings and courts all over the Continent, he never settled. For periods, other than his native Holland, he stayed in England, Germany, France, Italy and Switzerland, dying in Basel in 1536. In his later years, his letters betray a preoccupation with his failing health, a desire for freedom above money, and, as in most of his work, a palpable sense of humanity.

[118] There were 4151.
[119] An alternative date for his birth is given as 1466.

Erasmus was a political animal, acutely aware of his own position, and of his effect, in relation to the world around him. He had to be. His translation of the New Testament into Latin, in 1516, though widely acclaimed, placed him at the very heart of the religious controversies of the age, and though he attracted wide-spread fame, he was equally criticized. Perhaps because of this, his voluminous and erudite letters to correspondents all over Europe reveal that he spent a lot of his time, when he was not laying the foundation for what he believed should be his luminous place in posterity, in looking over his shoulder. From the very beginning, Erasmus had been deeply embroiled in an emotional and ambivalent relationship to the Catholic Church – a tug of love and war that he battled with all of his life. However, despite his advocacy of reform, Erasmus did not break with Catholicism. Nevertheless, it was with a complicated cocktail of admiration and suspicion that he was perceived by Church authorities.

This chapter is about Erasmus's *Ciceronianus,* a satire written in 1528 in which the name of Giulio Camillo plays a part. The *Ciceronianus* raises several questions that are difficult to answer. There are questions of identity; of reality versus fiction; and about paganism. The character of Nosoponus, for example, is said by some to be based on Christophe de Longueil, a Northerner, while others think he is to be based on the Italian Cardinal Bembo.[120] Crucially, the identity of the man who gave a speech on Good Friday, in Rome, is also questionable. Many commentators suggest that the orator was Tommaso Inghirami of Volterra.[121] I will put the case instead for Camillo. Of course it may be that certain characters and events in the book were not *actually* based on any particular real occurrence or specific person but were composites, or fantasies, made up by Erasmus to make a point. Nevertheless, in a book a good third of which is explicitly concerned with an

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[120] See *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterdami,* Ed. H.M. Allen, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937), *Ep*:2632,n.196. References to the Epistles herein afterwards referred to as Allen *Ep.*

[121] Levi says that the speech described was probably given on The Day of the Parasceve, or Good Friday, the 6th of April, 1509, in the presence of Pope Julius II. See the introduction and notes and p562, n.306, in *Collected Works of Erasmus 6: Ciceronianus,* Ed. A.H.T. Levi, trans. Betty Knott-Sharpe (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1986); Bolzoni also describes this speech. See Bolzoni, Lina, 'Erasmo e Camillo: il dibattitio sul'imitazione', *Filologia antica e moderna* 4 (1993), p.73. See also Chomarat, Jacques, *Grammaire et Rhetorique Chez Erasme, vol 2* (Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 1981), p. 939 and p.1090.

unambiguous, contemporary account of the literary and oratorical luminaries of the moment – with 'naming and shaming'- it does seem worthwhile to consider the hidden identity of those at its very core. It may have been that Erasmus's professed (rather than actual) assessment of Camillo was instrumental in undermining Camillo's reputation in the eyes of later historians, such as Tiraboschi and Bolgar.

I begin with a précis of the *Ciceronianus* itself, with particular emphasis on the section regarding the Good Friday speech in which Camillo is named. Next I discuss the identity of the orator who gave the speech. I will discuss the nature of Camillo's response to the *Ciceronianus*, the *Trattato dell'Imitazione.* Lastly I will discuss the idea of paganism with regard to the *Ciceronianus* and Camillo. Before any of this, however, I will attempt to put the idea of what was meant by 'Ciceronianism' in context.

Ciceronianism

The issue of Ciceronianism is a complex and broad-ranging topic.[122] It was a debate that had rolled on for centuries, an ancient stylistic and ecclesiastical question. There were several strands to the argument: was Cicero the paragon of literary virtue or was that honour due to another? If he was a paragon, should we aim to emulate or imitate him or should we instead try to forge our own style? Was it in fact possible to create a literary style without reference to previous authors? And if it was necessary to refer to an earlier author then should that author be Cicero?

The debate became further complicated by the perceived lack of style of the authors of the New Testament. For the philologists, translators, commentators and critics whose job it was to deal in words, this question of style was paramount. And yet to be seen to align oneself overly with stylistics – particularly the sophisticated manner of Cicero - rather than to appreciate the writings of the New Testament as given and inspired by God, was seen as a

[122] See Appendix II for a fuller discussion of the history of Ciceronianism.

victory of style over content and therefore worthy of derogation and ridicule: Ciceronianism became an open battle-field for irony versus piety.

By the early part of the sixteenth century, as the use of Latin and the vernacular in the universities vied for dominance, the issue of Ciceronianism got knottier still. Some of the so-called 'Ciceronians', for example Christophe de Longueil who is mentioned at length in the *Ciceronianus*, were said to adhere to such a strict regard for Cicero that they aimed to imitate his every word and turn of phrase. Italy, as the homeland of Latin, and particularly the Roman Academy, was seen (justifiably or not) as the greenhouse of this particular strand of literary fanaticism. Cardinal Bembo, papal secretary to Leo X,[123] was considered to be at the heart of Ciceronianism in Rome; his creed can be seen in a reply he sent to Pico on the subject: 'firstly, we must imitate the best models [i.e. the models of Cicero]; secondly, our aim must be to rival them; and, thirdly, in rivaling them, we must endeavour to surpass them'.[124] However, by as early as 1513, Bembo had already dropped the idea of one single model to imitate. Still others took a far more moderate view. As Levi says, 'The term 'Ciceronian'...covered a wide range of opinion and practice, and many a 'Ciceronian' was by no means as rigid and doctrinaire as [the] extremists caricatured by Erasmus'.[125] The *Ciceronianus* itself, with its disparaging depiction of a 'Ciceronian' in action, did much to enflame the dispute. In fact the very term 'Ciceronianism' can be dated to the time of the publication of Erasmus's work.

The *Ciceronianus*

The *Ciceronianus* relates the imaginary conversation of the 'Ciceronian' Nosoponus (or Mr. Workmad), with Bulephorus (Mr. Counsellor) and Hypologus (his Back-up). Bulephorus aims to direct Nosoponus away from his narrow obsession with Cicero, in which endeavour of course, at length, he succeeds. The book can be divided, roughly, into three parts. In the first

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[123] Secretary from 1513-21.
[124] Quoted in Sandys, J.E., *Harvard lectures on the revival of learning*,(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press , 1905), p.159.
[125] Levi, introduction to *Ciceronianus*, p.324.

section, Bulephorus and Hypologus spy Nosoponus coming towards them, looking ill, 'more like a ghost than a human being'.[126] They decide to collude together to try to make him feel better, to cure him of his wasting Ciceronian disease, his '*zelodulea,* his 'style-addiction''. They engage him in conversation and Bulephorus himself pretends to be an adherent of Cicero and to share Nosoponus's infatuation, so that he will be allowed to become 'an initiate in the same mysteries'.[127] Nosoponus explains the lengths to which he goes to imbibe the full essence of his master: pictures of Cicero all over his house; not allowing himself to read anything but Cicero's works; leading a life of abstinence 'to prevent any gross substance from invading the seat of the limpid mind'. He has prepared lexicons of the author's characteristic expressions and phrases in alphabetical order big enough that 'Two strong pack-horses with proper saddles could hardly carry [them] on their backs'.[128] The tone of this first section is light and bantering: it is a comedy.

Heralded by the description of the Good Friday speech, the second part of the book turns serious. Bulephorus turns the table on Nosoponus; now he is 'in earnest'.[129] In several long speeches, Bulephorus gives forth on his theory that to be a Ciceronian is to be basically un-Christian: it is inappropriate for a pious Christian to be over-concerned with using Ciceronian language to discuss Christian themes;[130] it has become the norm to value Classical allusions over Biblical ones,[131] that to ape Cicero is to 'behave like a fool'.[132] Ciceronianism is, in short, says Bulephorus:

> ...paganism, believe me, Nosoponus, sheer paganism...[133]

The third part of the *Ciceronianus*, is devoted to a long discussion between the three main protagonists of who should be considered Ciceronian, and who

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[126] Erasmus, *Ciceronianus,* p.342.
[127] *Ibid.*, p.352.
[128] *Ibid.*, p.346.
[129] *Ibid.*, p.389.
[130] *Ibid.*, pp.387-392.
[131] *Ibid.*, pp.393-396.
[132] *Ibid.*, pp.397-399.
[133] *Ibid.*, p.394.

should not. The characters trawl through Europe in a sweeping critical literary overview. An example can be seen in the treatment of Guillaume Budé, the great scholar of the French court, secretary to Francis 1st and instigator of the *Bibliothéque Nationale.* Erasmus and Budé's relationship had begun around 1516 and their correspondence over a decade shows a true engagement and meeting of minds. The apogée of Erasmus's professed respect for Budé can be seen in a letter to Étienne Poncher, Bishop of Paris, in 1517, in which he calls him 'most certainly the glory of France'. However, in the *Ciceronianus,* Budé is cited as being inferior to the printer Josse Bade as a failed Ciceronian,[134] closely followed by a disparaged Jacques Lefèvre. This of course could be taken as a compliment, as there is no great accolade in being praised by Nosoponus, however Budé did not take it that way. A flurry of letters was written to Erasmus asking him to rethink his appraisal, but in the end it contributed to the rupture of Budé's and Erasmus's relationship.[135]

The third part of the *Ciceronianus* sent waves of scandal throughout Europe, sparking furious responses. One of the most vitriolic was Jules-César Scaliger's scathing *Oratio Pro. M.Tullio Cicerone Contra Des. Erasmum* (Paris, 1531) in which he accuses Erasmus as culpable of nothing less than parricide, in defaming 'Our Father of Letters'.[136] Scaliger's *Oratio Pro. M.Tullio ...* is a hefty tome running to hundreds of pages, written in Latin. Erasmus wrongly thought this work to be by Cardinal Girolamo Aleander, an erstwhile companion in Venice.[137] The confusion over the authorship is further complicated by a series of letters to Erasmus from Zwichem, a lawyer, who insinuated that it was in fact *Camillo* who had written the work. Camillo's *Trattato dell'Imitazione* circulated Paris and Padua in manuscript, but was not

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[134] *Ibid.*, pp. 420-421.

[135] For a discussion of Erasmus and Budé's relationship, see André Stegmann 'Erasme et la France (1495-1520)' in *Colloquium Erasmianum: Actes du Colloque International réuni à Mons...*(Mons: 1968), pp.275 – 97.

[136] See Scaliger, Jules-Cesar, *Orationes Duae Contra Erasmum, Oratio Pro. M. Tullio Cicerone Contra Des. Erasmum (1531) & Adversus Des. Erasmi Roterod. Dialogum Ciceronianum Oratio Secunda (1537)* Ed. Michel Magnien, (Geneva: Droz, 1999), p.11. Scaliger followed up his initial attack six years later with *Adversus Des. Erasmi Roterod. Dialogum Ciceronianum Oratio Secunda* (Paris, 1537), another derisory tract. Étiene Dolet's furious *Erasmianus* was published in 1535 and there were also works from Ortensio Lando and Gaudenzio Merula among others. For a survey of responses, see Pigman III, G.W. 'Imitation and the Renaissance Sense of the past: the reception of Erasmus' *Ciceronianus'* in *Journal for Medieval and Renaissance Studies,* 1979 (9), 155-77.

[137] He mentions this in many of his letters. See Allen *Epp.* 2565:25-6; 2575: 6-7; 2579: 37-8; 2581: 5-6.

published, in Italian, until the year before he died, as *Due trattati dell' Eccellentissimo M. Iulio Camillo: L'Uno Delle Materie [...]: L'Altro dell' Imitazione* (Venice: de Farri, 1544). Please see Appendix I for an English translation of *Trattato dell' Imitazione.*[138]

The Good Friday Speech

To return to the speech that begins the second part of the book, the character of Bulephorus describes an impressive oration that he witnessed in Rome in the presence of the Pope:

> I'll tell you a story – not a bit of hearsay, but something I saw with my own eyes, heard with my own ears. In Rome at the time the two men with the most distinguished reputation as speakers were Pietro Fedra and Camillo....Neither of them though, unless I'm mistaken was actually Roman by birth. Now a certain person had been appointed to speak on the death of Christ...in the presence of the pontiff himself. A few days before the event I received an invitation from the literary community to go and hear the speech. 'Be sure to be there,' they said. 'Now you will really hear how the language of Rome sounds in the mouth of a Roman.'[139]

Bulephorus says there were 'rows of cardinals and bishops and, beside the common crowd, quite a number of scholars who were staying in Rome'. Eventually he begins to describe the speech itself, giving a long and unflattering description. At the end he says:

> In short, this Roman spoke so Romanly that I heard nothing about the death of Christ...The only thing he could be praised for was for speaking in Roman fashion and recalling something of Cicero. One could approve of a speech like this as being a demonstration of ability

[138] I am very grateful to my father, F. Robinson, for translating *Trattato dell'Imitazione,* and for his insights into Camillo.
[139] *Ciceronianus,* p. 384.

> and intelligence if it were delivered by a schoolboy before his fellow pupils in class, but what connection, I ask you, did it have with such a day, such an audience, such a theme?[140]

Significantly, Bulephorus, asked for the name of the man whose speech on Good Friday in Rome that he has just described, says:

> ...I prefer to leave the name to be inferred, as it is not my present purpose to cast aspersions on anyone's name. What I am doing is to point out an error that should be avoided, one that under the shadow of a mighty name leads a good many people astray these days. This is what concerns us, Nosoponus; the name of the man in my story does not matter....

But of course it does matter! The *Ciceronianus* is hinged on the Good Friday speech. It comes at a pivotal point in the book, after which the tone and content changes from knock-about banter to critical deconstruction. Not to speak of the fact that casting aspersions on people's names is exactly what Bulephorus, Hypologus and Nosoponus then go on systematically to do. To reiterate Bulephorus's description:

> In Rome at the time the two men with the most distinguished reputation as speakers were Pietro Fedra and Camillo. Camillo was younger and in actuality the more powerful speaker but the older man had occupied the citadel first. Neither of them though, unless I'm mistaken was actually Roman by birth.

Pietro Fedra was Tommaso Fedra Inghirami (1470 – 1516) of Volterrra. Erasmus met and made friends with Fedra, by then a canon and Vatican librarian, in Rome, during his stay in the city in 1509. Erasmus mentions him in a letter to Joost Vroye (or Jodocus Gaverius) dated 1st 1523.[141] In this long letter, Erasmus mourns the recent loss of their common friend, Jan de Neve.

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[140] *Ibid.*, p.386.
[141] Allen *Ep.* 1347: 263-271. Translation in Levi, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p.421.

He says that he is feeling very mortal and goes on to talk about the people of distinction he has known in his life, throughout Europe, and the relative times of their demise. Pietro Fedra, he says, was under fifty when he died. He says that Fedra had earned his nick-name by playing the part of Phaedra in Seneca's *Hippolytus*, in the piazza in front of the palace of Cardinal Raffaele of San Giorgio; that he was known as an authoritative orator. According to Erasmus, in fact, Fedra 'won more fame with tongue than with pen, for he was a wonderfully copious and effective speaker'.[142]

In a letter written twelve years later, dated August 1535, when Erasmus was approaching his seventies, he describes his association with Camillo. This long letter, like the earlier one to Vroye, is autobiographical. Allen considers it to be a 'biographical document of some importance'.[143] It was first published in answer to a pamphlet that had been circulated by Peter Cursius, a poet, titled, *Petri Cursii Defensio pro Italia ad Erasmum Roterodamum.* In the pamphlet Cursius had defended the '*innumerabiles Itali disertissimi*' whose talents he thought bore comparison with those of Erasmus; among them he named Giulio Camillo.[144] Addressed to John Choler at the suggestion of Erasmus's secretary Gilbertus Cognatus, the letter of 1535 is a roll-call of the significant and influential men that Erasmus had met in Italy and elsewhere. In Venice, for example, in a list of other 'erudite' men, he includes Cardinal Aleander, of whom Erasmus was, by then, was suspicious.[145]

Erasmus lived in Italy around 1506-9. He stayed in Venice and in Rome. It is likely that Erasmus, as part of the Venetian circle that included Aldus Manutius, Aretin, Aleander and Serlio, would have known Camillo there: Erasmus lodged for a period at Aldus's house, in the Sestière San Polo, near

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[142] Allen *Ep.* 1347: 263-265
Ibidem cognoui et amaui Petrum Phedrum, lingua verius quam calamo celebrem: erat mira in dicendo tum copia, tum autoritas.
N.B. Orthographic conventions of Allen have been followed in this and subsequent quotations.
[143] Allen, *Ep.* 3032, introductory notes.
[144] Allen *Ep.* 3007, n.54.
[145] *Ibid.* Erasmus had 'convinced himself' that the 'prime mover' of the circulation of the initial pamphlet by Cursius that had led to the publication of the letter in the first place was Aleander.

where Camillo himself lived, but Erasmus does not talk about this. Instead he refers to Camillo in Rome:

> Cum Petro Phaedra, cuius eloquentiam [*sic*] tum Roma pro Cicerone mirabatur, mihi fuit propinqua familiaritas, cum Iulio Camillo me nonnunquam eadem iunxit culcitra.[146]

Is it Erasmus's intention, in mentioning Pietro Fedra and Camillo in the same sentence to refer back to their juxtaposition in the *Ciceronianus*?[147] Certainly it seems that Fedra's 'Ciceronian' eloquence had impressed Erasmus, and this alone might be reason enough to assume that it was Fedra as opposed to Camillo who was the orator implied by the Good Friday speech, playing such a pivotal role in the book. However Ciceronianism was not straightforward. It was not, for Erasmus at least, only a matter of loquacity and style. As Bolzoni has said, 'Ciceronianism', for Erasmus, was 'a form of idolatry' (*una forma idolatria*).[148] He saw it as a *'culto delle parole'*.[149] And this he identified with paganism. It touched on what he identified as one of the most crucial issues of the age.

In a letter written on 5th July 1532 in reply to a correspondent named Zwichem, Erasmus discusses Giulio Camillo's Amphitheatre. He talks about the Theatre in terms of it being able to excite as great a 'tragedy in study' as that which 'Luther produced in religion'.[150]

> ... vereor ne molitores isti non leuiorem trageoediam excitent in studiis quam Lutherus excitauit in religione...

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[146] Allen, *Ep.* 3032: 219-222. He mentions 'Camillum' later, again (assumes Allen) in conjunction with Aleander, at 355-359.

[147] He goes on, even in this late letter, to talk about the issue of imitation. Allen *Ep.* 3032:233-259.

[148] Bolzoni, 'Erasmo e Camillo...' p.80.

[149] *Ibid.*

[150] Allen *Ep.* 2682:8-13.

> Amphiteatrum nae tu scite depinxisti, opus profecto tali Rege dignum. Nunc haud admiror si quosdam male habuit meus Ciceronianus. Hinc videlicet, hinc illae lacrymae. Equidem illis istam gloriam non inuideo, sed vereor ne molitores isti non leuiorem trageoediam excitent in studiis quam Lutherus excitauit in religione.

He continues, in this letter to talk about the authorship of Scaliger's attack. Perhaps the 'tragedy' is not so much about religion as the personal wounding that he felt he had suffered. He also discusses his *Adages.*

I will return to the pagan aspect of the *Ciceronianus* later, but will now look more closely at the letters between Erasmus and Zwichem, dating from 1531 to 1532, as they have made important contributions to interpretations of Camillo's work.

Zwichem, or Viglius Zuichemus (1507-1577), as he was otherwise known, was a lawyer, initially a disciple of Alciati. He met Erasmus in 1531, presenting him with a ring with the signs of the zodiac, and subsequently struck up a correspondence, in which he often mentions their common regard for Alciati. Erasmus asked Zwichem to report to him on Giulio Camillo's work in Venice,[151] and Zwichem was happy to act, in effect, the spy.

In the first of the Camillo letters, dated 28th March 1532, Zwichem says the Ciceronians in Venice 'were whispering I know not what about a certain Giulio Camillo'.[152] He mentions that Camillo had written an apologia against the *Ciceronianus*, although Zwichem himself had not been able to obtain a copy. Zwichem assumed that the apologia in question was Scaliger's bitter *Oratio pro M. Tullius...*[153] In fact Camillo's response was contained in his much more gentle and considered *Trattato Dell' Imitazione.* Zwichem talks about the fame of Camillo's 'Theatre'. He has heard that it is 'a work of amazing character', 'in which the things seen are shown no less clearly than anything which Cicero

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[151] Some of the letters from Erasmus to Zwichem are not extant, but the request is apparent from Zwichem's replies.

[152] Excerpt from Allen *Ep.* 2632: 174-197, (28th March 1532): Habes quid mihi cum illis conuenient; nunc quos triumphos apparent, breuiter exponam. Cum diebus hilarioribus qui Quadragesimam praecurrunt Venetias essem profectus, sussurare illic Ciceronianos nescio quid de Iulio quodam Camillo subodorabar. Id mysterium postea quidam amicus mihi reuelauit: illum scilicet scripsisse Apologiam aduersus Ciceronianum tuum, quam plerique a se lectam mihi affirmarunt. Sed ego nondum potui, tametsi sedulo annixus, tam praeclaro libello potiri, in quo illi adhuc symmistae secreto delitiantur. Tum vero et eundem Amphitheatrum quoddam, admirabilis ingenii opus, construxisse aiunt, in quod qui spectatum admittatur non minus diserte de qualibet re quam ipse Cicero dicere poterit. Ego fabulam initio esse credidi, donec forte inter colloquendum ex Baptista Egnatio rem totam apertius intelligerem. Dicitur enim Architectus ille, in certos quosdam locos, quidquid de quaque re apud Ciceronem reperitur, redegisse. Omnia quoque vocabula, quibus ille et quoties vtatur, et in quo sensu, sedulo conquisiuisse. Tum certos quosdam ordines gradusque figuram disposuisse, atque alia multa, stupendo quodam labore ac diuino quodam acumine, nulli antea in Cicerone animaduersa annotasse; descripsisseque haec omnia illum aiunt in chartis quibusdam quae inuolui atque explicari possint, quae ad Amphitheatri parietes suspensae confestim id quod queritur suppeditare valeant. Quid plura dicam? Omnia illi cum Nosopono tuo conueniunt.

[153] Yates, p.166.

could say'. Although Zwichem had not in fact met with Camillo at this point, he nevertheless ends his letter to Erasmus saying disparagingly of Camillo: 'What more can I say? Your Nosoponus could tell it all.'

Quid plura dicam? Omnia illi cum Nosopono tuo conueniunt.

The following June, Zwichem wrote to Erasmus again, saying that, now, he has met Camillo and seen the work.[154] According to Zwichem, the Theatre is a 'wooden construction with many images and caskets all over the place' (*Opus est ligneum multis imaginibus insignitum, multisque vndique capsules refertum*) divided into 'orders' and 'grades' (*ordines et gradus*). He says that Camillo has many names for the Theatre, sometimes calling it a 'mind and soul artistically wrought', or a 'window' (*mentem et animum fabrefactum, aliquando fenestratum*). Inside the Theatre, everything that the human mind can conceive is expressed by 'corporeal signs' (*signis deinde quibusdam corporeis*). It is because of this corporeal, or bodily gaze (presumably at the signs) that Camillo calls the work a Theatre. Zwichem says that the King of France is eager for the arrival of this 'magnificent work' (*magnifico opere*), but that he wants it to be translated into French, which is holding up proceedings. Zwichem goes on to say that Camillo's Latin is poor and that he has some kind of stammer (*sed valde imparibus propter linguae impedimentum*). He says Camillo speaks and teaches in the vernacular, a professor at Bologna (*In*

[154] Allen *Ep.* 2657: 30-60. Abbreviated excerpt specifically dealing with the Theatre:

De Amphitheatro nuper aliquid promisi. De quo possem nunc longissime scribere...Opus est ligneum multis imaginibus insignitum, multisque vndique capsules refertum: tum varii in eo ordines et gradus. ...Cum rogarem de operis ratione, institutoque atque successu, cuncta religiose quasi obstupescens rei miraculo, chartas aliquas obiecit, easque recitauit, sic ut numeros omnes et clausulas, totumque artificium exprimeret Italicis modis, sed valde imparibus propter linguae impedimentum. Rex vrgere dicitur, vt redeat tandem in Galliam cum magnifico opere. Sed cum latina omnia debeant in Gallicam linguam, volente sic Rege, transponi, in quam rem interpretem scriptoremque conduxit, fit vt profectionem differe cogatur, ne semiplenum opus exhibeat. Hoc autem theatrum suum auctor multis appellat nominibus, aliquando mentem et animum fabrefactum, aliquando fenestratum: fingit enim omnia quae mens humana concipit, quaeque corporeis oculis videre non possumus, posse tamen diligenti consideratione complexa signis deinde quibusdam corporeis sic exprimi, vt vnusquisque oculis statim percipiat quicquid alioqui in profundo mentis humanae demersum est. Et ab hac corporea etiam inspectione theatrum appellauit...

I am grateful to Gilbert Markus for help with the translation of this, and the passage above. See also Yates, pp. 131-132.

vernacula tamen lingua aliquid valere dicitur, quam etiam aliquando Bononiae professum eum aiunt).

Yates is convinced of Zwichem's account and bases her reconstruction of Camillo's Theatre on a 'work of wood'. She concludes that Camillo himself must have produced the Theatre specifically in order to memorise Cicero:

> The memory system of the Theatre is intended to be used for memorising every notion to be found in Cicero's works; the drawers under the images contained Ciceronian speeches. The system, with its Hermetic-Cabalist philosophy and foundation, belongs into the world of Venetian oratory...[155]

It is true that a part of *L'idea* is concerned with the works of Cicero. Towards the end of *L'idea* Camillo talks briefly about there being space for a 'great anthology drawn from the writings of Cicero, with which one can clothe in Ciceronian style the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost'.[156] But this is by no means the only literary allusion in the work. On the same page as the mention of the Ciceronian anthology, for example, Camillo talks about wishing the short stories of Boccaccio to be dispersed throughout the Theatre.

I think that there are some incongruities in Zwichem's account, though certainly the latter part of this letter is accurate. Camillo's manuscripts and later publications are in Italian rather than in Latin, and much of his work is concerned with recording vernacular differentiations in parts of the Veneto and Friulan region that surrounded Venice, though from references in *L'idea* and other work he was evidently also well versed with Latin, Greek and some Hebrew sources. His reply to the *Ciceronianus, Dell' Imitazione,* was itself composed in the vernacular. Given this, it seems strange that Zwichem should think that Camillo was the author of Scaliger's *Oratio Pro. M.Tullio Cicerone Contra Des. Erasmum* ...as this hefty work is in Latin. Conceivably, if Zwichem had not seen a copy, he was not aware of its title. Zwichem says Camillo had a speech impediment and, for Yates, under Zwichem's eye, the 'Idea of the Memory Theatre dissolves into stammering incoherence'.[157]

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[155]Yates, p.166.
[156] *L'idea,* p.84.
[157] Yates, p.132. I think this might be because the 'Memory Theatre' did not exist.

Perhaps, as Bolzoni has pointed out, Camillo was under duress at this time: he had in effect given copyright of the Theatre to the King of France and therefore he was not at liberty to speak openly about it.[158] Possibly this accounts for Camillo's hesitation in discussing it with Zwichem. Camillo's main work at this time, in which he mentions Erasmus, was *L'idea dell' Eloquenza.*[159] The principle of eloquence and the ability to persuade through the power of speech was, for Camillo, of paramount importance; the printed word was for him of far less weight than it was for Erasmus. Given that speech itself was Camillo's stock in trade, it seems odd – though not out of the question - that he should have a stammer. Is it possible that Zwichem, here, was inveigling Erasmus's favour? Another incongruity is that while Zwichem describes the Theatre as a work made of wood, it requires to be 'translated' into French. We have Zwichem's word that he visited Camillo in Venice, and witnessed there his 'marvelous creation', but I do not think that he fully comprehended it.

The fate of Zwichem's letters is intriguing. Erasmus's secretary at this time was Gilbertus Cognatus.[160] Cognatus kept a copy of the letters from Zwichem and was later to pass them off as his own. Many years later, in a letter to Giovanni Metello in 1558, Cognatus used Zwichem's description of the wonderful Theatre in an imagined first-hand account. For Cognatus to bother to keep a copy of the letter for twenty-five years suggests that in private, Erasmus had shown a great deal of interest in Giulio Camillo.

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[158] Bolzoni, 'Erasmo e Camillo...', p.75.

[159] See Bolzoni, Lina, *Il teatro della memoria...L'idea dell'eloquenza*, p.107. In this manuscript, Camillo described a seven-tiered system, close in form to the Theatre later described in *L'idea del Theatro*, in which artifice and language imitate nature. He also talks about a 'secret' part for 'memory places'; this equates well with Yates's and Bolzoni's thesis regarding memory. However while I think that this is clearly an important part of the scheme, it is not the whole picture.

[160] Cognatus, or Cousin, (1506-1572) was Erasmus's secretary from 1530-1535.

Erasmus and Cognatus

The publication of the *Ciceronianus*, in 1528, came two years before Camillo's invitation to France by François 1st. According to Liruti, Camillo's eighteenth century biographer, Lazare de Baïf, François's ambassador in Venice, had met Camillo there, some time in 1529, and would presumably have alerted François to Camillo's work. Though, ironically, it may well have been the *Ciceronianus* itself that helped to bring Camillo to the attention of the King.

Trattato Dell' Imitazione

Camillo's response to the *Ciceronianus* is the *Trattato dell' Imitazione.* It begins with an exhortation to Erasmus:

> What shall I say of you, Erasmus, man of so much knowledge and virtue...not only... eloquent, but also of good judgement? [161]

Camillo makes it clear that while his and Erasmus's views on imitation are different, they are not at odds.[162] Erasmus advocates imitation based on equivalence of style, while Camillo recommends an imitation stemming from a judgement of, and identification with, the nature of the imitated. He reinforces this point, saying:

> I do not believe it can be possible ever to imitate an author's nature, only the judgement proceeding therefrom.

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[161] This and the following quotations are from F. Robinson's English translation of *Trattato dell' Imitazione,* in Appendix 1.

[162] Lina Bolzoni mentions an annotated copy of his *L'Idea dell'eloquenza* in the Biblioteca Communale, in Udine, in which he talks about this work on imitation, announcing that he will write about the work of Erasmus, 'without blaming anyone'. Bolzoni reproduces this in *Il teatro della memoria*...p.107.

The idea of judgement is central to the piece. Only from right judgement can correct decisions be made as regard to the best use of language, stemming from this central core of identification with an author's sense of literary correctness. Later, Camillo goes on to say:

> ...my advice would be to fabricate, be it by artifice...[language]...of our own of equal beauty... transforming it through composition as does the bee...

Camillo's tone is mellifluous; he aims to coax and please, and urges Erasmus to change his opinion:

> Turn, oh unique genius, change your style, and you yourself will be content to say the opposite of what you have written, if, as I believe, you feel the opposite.

In Camillo's opinion, there was once a golden age of language, or more specifically a 'golden century', and this was the century of Cicero. Language, like the rising and the setting of the sun, has a beginning, a zenith and decline, and it seems only sensible, in the light of this, to look to the 'most perfect time' for guidance for the creation of new language. This is not to say that every word and phrase must originate from here, as after all new concepts and new inventions require the creation of new words to describe them. Nevertheless, the guiding principles that informed the underlying structure of the language represented by the golden century should be adopted to achieve the best approximation not only for good style but also for the best sense of meaning. However this is not to say that a new author should slavishly copy the old. Camillo makes the comparison between language and an ancient edifice.[163] If an architect wanted to make a new building from old bricks, he would need to dismantle the old building and recreate it to his own design, using his own sense of judgement. This sense of judgement can be informed by the sense of beauty or balance of an old master, and yet the building itself will be wholly new because it has been re-constructed through the agency of a new vision. Rhetorical flourishes of the old style will still be visible, just as an architectural piece of cornice work, or a

[163] Lina Bolzoni has equated Camillo's response to language with a deconstructive approach, saying that the bricks become the building blocks of language itself. See Bolzoni, *De L'Imitation*, pp.i-xxxii.

sculpture, may retain its form as an intact reminder of the old work, but still the overall work will be a new formation.

In many ways, Camillo and Erasmus in fact do not diverge in their opinions, but say much the same thing, each from a different perspective. And as Camillo says in the beginning with his exhortation to Erasmus, he assumes that Erasmus himself is a man of 'good judgement' who only needs a little encouragement to admit that they share the same opinion. Only towards the end of the piece does Camillo venture a little anger, saying that he is willing to draw his sword to defend his own opinions; but, even at this point, Erasmus is himself not mentioned by name, and the episode feels very 'tacked-on', a very muted, if not tongue-in-cheek, rhetorical flourish.

For Pigman, who has made a wide ranging assessment of all of the contemporary responses to the *Ciceronianus,* it is Camillo's *Dell' Imitazione* that is 'the most important'.[164] The form as much as the content of Camillo's reply is responsible for this. Pigman has posited Erasmus's *Ciceronianus* in terms of arguments about 'historical decorum'.[165] 'Even if Erasmus' primary concern in writing the *Ciceronianus* is to expose renascent paganism disguising itself as Ciceronian classicism,' he says, '[Erasmus] does not rely on religious appeals. The force of his attack comes from his use of the universally accepted criterion of decorum...'.[166] As Pigman points out, Camillo's response points to the 'internal contradiction' of Erasmus's position. This contradiction is 'between erecting adaptation to the demands of the present as the central standard for good style and ignoring the *volgari* as the languages of the present.' By answering Erasmus in Italian, rather than in Latin, and as the only contemporary author to do so, the political stance of Camillo's response is implicit.

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[164] Pigman III, p.174.
[165] *Ibid.*, p.160. Pigman is arguing against the 'widely accepted position that a new sense of the past distinguishes Italian humanism and the renaissance in general from the Middle Ages', the 'most persuasive spokesman' for which Pigman identifies as Eugenio Garin, p.155.
[166] *Ibid.*, p.161.

Bolzoni on the other hand has interpreted Camillo's response as representative of his profound cosmic vision:

> Chez Camillo, l'exaltation de l'unité est profondement liée à une vision cyclique du mouvement cosmique. C'est bien pourquoi imiter Cicéron prend une signification qui va bien au-delà de la dimension littéraire: cela signifie savoir saisir un cycle vital à son moment culminant, cela implique la possibilité d'en reproduire artificiellement la beauté et la vigueur.[167]

Bolzoni says that the algebraic problem of the idea – that is to say the existence of the perfect model of literary beauty to which everything should refer and which in the last analysis is the only true criterion of the judgement of value – was the meat of earlier discussions on imitation instigated by Bembo.[168] The royal way (*voie royale*) towards the perfect idea is the imitation of the perfect authors because in their texts, the idea is made incarnate (and is therefore made visible) in a manner markedly superior to the one (divided and imperfect) in which the idea is made manifest in the specific beings of nature. Bolzoni points out that even though Camillo is a man of letters, he does not seem, as was usually the tradition, to demand the superiority of letters over the figurative arts. Here, she says, his proximity and also his distance from Bembo's position can be measured. In the end, at the same moment that Camillo converges with Erasmus's opinion that it is impossible to imitate individual nature, he refuses to draw the same consequences. The problem is posed categorically in terms of rhetoric, or rather on a plan of the philosophy of rhetoric for which Camillo intends to posit a new and decisive key.[169] This new and decisive key, which he has discovered, is in the form of a 'natural philosophy' (*philosophie naturelle*) based on topical rhetorical figures (*la figure topique*).

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[167] 'For Camillo, the exaltation of unity is a profound elision of a cyclical vision with cosmic movement. That is why it is good to imitate a meaning of Cicero's that goes well in the literary dimension: to know that meaning is to seize a vital cycle at its moment of culmination, that is to imply the possibility of artificially reproducing its beauty and its vigour.' From Bolzoni's introduction to *De L'Imitation*, p.xxvii. Translations from French are my own.

[168] *Ibid.* p.xl. See also Bolzoni, 'Erasmo e Camillo...', p.78.

[169] 'Au moment même où il convient avec Erasme qu'il n'est pas possible d'imiter la nature individuelle, Camillo refuse d'en tirer les mêmes conséquences que lui. Le problème est posé catégoriquement sur le plan rhétorique, ou plutôt sur le plan d'une philosophie de la rhétorique pour laquelle Camillo entend posséder une clé neuve et décisive...' *De L'Imitation*, p.xxxii.

Ars Oratoria

That Camillo wrote a response at all to the *Ciceronianus* is the strongest evidence that he was implicated personally in the work. Tommasso Inghirami, or Fedra, of course, was not in a position to clear his name, having been dead for twelve years before Erasmus even came to write the book. Despite Fedra's distinction as the 'Cicero of his generation', is it possible that Erasmus has mentioned him in the context of the orator of the Good Friday speech as a (conveniently dead) red herring?[170]

It was as orators rather than as writers that men like Fedra and Camillo won renown. As Erasmus himself said of Fedra, he '...really won more fame with tongue than with pen...'. Fedra's written literary output is not substantial. Camillo's work was all in manuscript at the time that Erasmus wrote the work in 1528. It was thanks to Ludovico Dolce, and to Girolamo Muzio, and the Marchese del Vasto and others[171] that printed versions of Camillo's writings have survived at all. Camillo clearly was ambivalent about the power of print – an ambivalence that he shared with many others.[172] But perhaps this is where we are given a real clue as to why Erasmus chose these two men at all to illustrate his text: it was that their very threat lay not so much in the written, or printed, as in their spoken word. Erasmus was scared of the power of their preaching.

'Philosophy,' wrote Lorenzo Valla (1407-57) in around 1430, 'is like a soldier or a tribune under the command of oratory, the queen.'[173] Valla, whom Erasmus greatly admired, was instrumental in placing the idea of philosophy at the service of oratory and rhetoric, or the art of the word. Oratory, and orators, treated the question of ethics 'much more clearly, weightily,

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[170] While the speech in question was in 1509, the *Ciceronianus* was not published until 1528, and Fedra had died in 1516.

[171] Gilbertus Cognatus, for example, Erasmus's secretary; his re-iteration of the letter from Zwichem kept the memory of the Theatre alive long after Camillo was dead. See above.

[172] For an interesting discussion of this issue see: De Luca, Elena, 'Silent Meanings: Emblems, Lay Culture and Political Awareness in Sixteenth Century Bologna' *Emblematica*, 12 (2002), 61-81.

[173] Valla, Lorenzo, *On the True Good*, or *De Voluptate*, written circa 1431: *Scritti*, pp.30-31; *Opera*, pp. 906-07, quoted in Seigel, Jerrold E. *Rhetoric and philosophy in Renaissance humanism: the union of eloquence and wisdom, Petrarch to Valla*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 139.

magnificently' than did 'the obscure, squalid and anaemic philosophers'. This ideal of eloquence was based on a belief in the persuasive power of the word: the very breath of the word itself an active agent of change.

As Lorch says '...the rhetor was not merely a teacher of rhetoric but a master of *ars oratoria*, or the art of speech, which ...was intended to help man to explore, exploit, and control the magic power of the word.'[174] It is significant, given the perceived importance of the orator's power and of the authority of speech, that in Camillo's response to the *Ciceronianus,* the *Trattato dell' Imitazione,* he writes at length about the definition of a sigh.[175] He begins with the verb, *sospirar*, 'to sigh'; moving on to *mandar sospiri, gittar sospiri*: 'to give a sigh, to heave a sigh'; and then *romper l'aere da presso coi sospiri* 'to split the surrounding air with sighs'; and finally *far coi sospiri tremar le cose opposte, far mover le frondi, crollare I boschi*, 'to make things opposite tremble with (my) sighs, to move the leaves, to collapse the woods'. He is making a point about truth and metaphorical language, and suggests that the 'poet in this natural philosophy of illustrating topically would be wise to abandon things that are too far beyond the truth'. Like Erasmus, Camillo was aware of what Barker calls the 'metaphorical force'[176] of language, a force that is able to give language a 'turn',[177] and the necessity of using it judiciously. Nevertheless, he gives us a graphic clue, here, as to the extent of power that an orator in action was expected to achieve. There was about an orator the mystique of a magus. The breath of his word effected miracles. It could move the woods.

Erasmus of course was by no means oblivious to the power of the word. But there was in Erasmus a tropism for the written, rather than the spoken word.[178] It was in text itself, for him, that power resided. He may personally

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[174] Valla, Lorenzo *De Voluptate,* with intro. by Lorch, trans. A. Kent Hieatt & Maristella Lorch (New York: Arabis, 1977), p.13.
[175] See *Trattato dell'Imitazione,* Appendix I.
[176] Barker, William, *The Adages of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pxxviii.
[177] *Ibid.*, p. xxviii. Barker is describing Erasmus's approach to the proverb.
[178] His famous translation of 'logos' as *sermo* rather than *verbum* or *oratio* exemplifies the dichotomy. Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle discusses this in *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p.35 in terms of a grammatical issue of gender.

have had difficulty in expressing himself orally. As he mentions in a letter describing his meeting with William, Archbishop of Canterbury, in a social setting, he was 'a man of few words, and do not push myself forward'.[179] He felt most at home in expressing *oratio* not in speech but in text.[180] Even in his *Adages,* proverbs designed for spoken use, '...though Erasmus is purportedly training a 'speaker' or 'orator,' ...the proverb seems most often to be found within the context of the written document'.[181] But there was more to Erasmus's antipathy to what he termed 'Ciceronian' than can be accounted for even by his insecurity over the spoken word.

A year before the publication of the *Ciceronianus,* Erasmus had written to Francisco Vergara, professor at the University of Alcala:

> ...No one denies that Cicero excelled in the art of speaking, although not every kind of eloquence suits particular persons or subjects. What does this odious boasting about the term *Ciceronian* mean? Let me whisper what I think in a few words. Under this pretence they hide their paganism, which is dearer to them than the glory of Christ....[182]

The letter to Vergara reveals that there is a subtext to the *Ciceronianus:* it may be seen as a handbook of those whom Erasmus considered tarred with the brush of paganism. This is a tentative suggestion. Budé, for example, whom Erasmus denigrates in the book, would not appear at first sight to be anything other than a pillar of the establishment. And yet if this was an underlying theme to the *Ciceronianus* it would go some way to explain why the book aroused such fury and seemed to touch a raw nerve within the

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[179] Letter to Johann von Botzheim, Basel, 30th January 1523, Allen *Ep.*1341A: 137-138.

[180] As O'Rourke Boyle says, Erasmus's 'antibarbarian campaign [was] founded in his conviction that man imitates the Logos most notably in *oratio,* not *ratio,* seek[ing] the triumph of grammar and rhetoric over logic'; Boyle, Marjorie O'Rourke, *Christening Pagan Mysteries; Erasmus in Pursuit of Wisdom,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), p.18. See also Levi, 'The Neoplatonist Calculus', in *Humanism in France,* edited A.H.T. Levi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970), pp.241-244.

[181] Barker, pxxviii.

[182] Allen *Ep.* 1885, VII. 193-4, 11. Quoted in Halkin, Léon-E., *Erasmus,* (Blackwell:Oxford, 1994), pp. 217-218.

literary community. The idea of paganism itself, however, leads to many questions, most crucial of which is what precisely Erasmus *meant* by the term.

Paganism

Despite what he was later to say in the *Ciceronianus*, Erasmus's involvement and fascination with pagan authors had begun early in his life.[183] Like Valla, his Italian precursor, one of his first missions had been to rid Europe of what he considered to be stylistic barbarians who did not appreciate the nuances of form represented by some of the pre-Christian writers. He began his major work on the subject, *Antibarbari*, in around 1488, when he was only nineteen years old,[184] adding to, and revising it, for over thirty years.[185] It was, for Erasmus, a seminal work. Like the *Ciceronianus* it is written in the form of a dialogue between a number of characters who represent different positions in an argument. One of the characters, Batt, who, like Bulephorus in the *Ciceronianus,* is thought most closely to represent the views of Erasmus himself, says:

> ...For my part, I will allow myself to be called after any pagan so long as he was deeply learned or supremely eloquent; nor shall I go back on this declaration, if only the pagan teaches me more excellent things than a Christian....[186]

It was through his very appreciation of the gifts of the pagan that Erasmus was himself able to bring depth and colour to his Christianity.[187] Erasmus was

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[183] Erasmus's love affair with certain of the pagan authors led Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle to comment that his '...baptism of pagan letters, his editing, translating, and commenting on classical literature for the advance of Christian learning is universally acknowledged as defining his evangelical humanism....'. Boyle, *Christening Pagan Mysteries...*, p.9.

[184] Or twenty-two, depending on his birth date.

[185] It was finally published by Froben in May, 1520.

[186] *Collected Works of Erasmus Vol. 23:Antibarbari/Parabolae*, Ed. Craig R. Thompson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), p.58.

[187] This is not to say that Erasmus always acknowledged his pagan sources. His *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*, or *Handbook of the Christian Soldier*, (the immediate predecessor of which was Valla's concept of the *miles christianus.*) was published in 1504. The prototype for the book was Cicero's *de Officiis.* But despite, or because of, his debt to Cicero, Erasmus in the very title of the *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* positioned himself as far away as possible from anything that smacked of paganism. '*Milites*', or 'soldiers' is the very antithesis of the 'pagan', the 'civilian', or the 'countryside'.

not alone in this of course. Pagan imagery and influence permeated culture from the new translations of pagan authors to pagan imagery in the visual arts. Painting and sculpture was awash with a sea of nymphs, fauns and satyrs. And there were subtle and powerful fusions of pagan with Christian theological motifs. Da Vinci's *Virgin and Child with St. Anne* (c.1508-10), for example, shows an image in which the positioning of the leg of the lamb across the knee of Jesus 'gives him the impression of a little hoof, like Pan, the spirit of awakened nature'.[188] Michelangelo's famous sculpture of Moses depicts him with horns radiating from his head.[189]

However this may be, Erasmus's position with regard to 'paganism' changes radically around 1528. There are many reasons for this that are outwith the scope of this work to address but I think that two principal causes for the alteration are represented in the figure of Giulio Camillo. Firstly, Erasmus's reputation was based on the printed word, and he viewed with suspicion those whose power lay in the spoken word; this was more than merely a difference in presentation, but crucial to the depth of persuasion which it was believed that an author or an orator could attain. Secondly, Erasmus was suspicious of developments in science, specifically the science propounded by Camillo. Camillo's image based system was a 'divine' philosophy: he was looking at the stars: an essential image of Camillo's Theatre, crucial to the idea of its spatial arrangement is Pan, the ancient god of the flocks. The magus in Erasmus believed profoundly in a philosophy based on the power of the word and he distrusted this vision of what he branded as a 'pagan' cosmology.

'What I call philosophy,' wrote Erasmus, 'is not a method of analysing first principles, matter, time, motion, infinity, but that wisdom which Solomon deemed more precious than all riches and on that account prayed God to give him above all else.'[190] While he is explicit about what he thinks philosophy is

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[188] Baring, Anne & Cashford, Jules, *The Myth of the Goddess: Evolution of an Image* (London: Arkana, 1991), p.593.

[189] The origin of the horns is biblical (possibly arising from the equivalence, in Hebrew, of the words 'horned' and 'radiated'; see Walker, Barbara G., *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), p.410.)

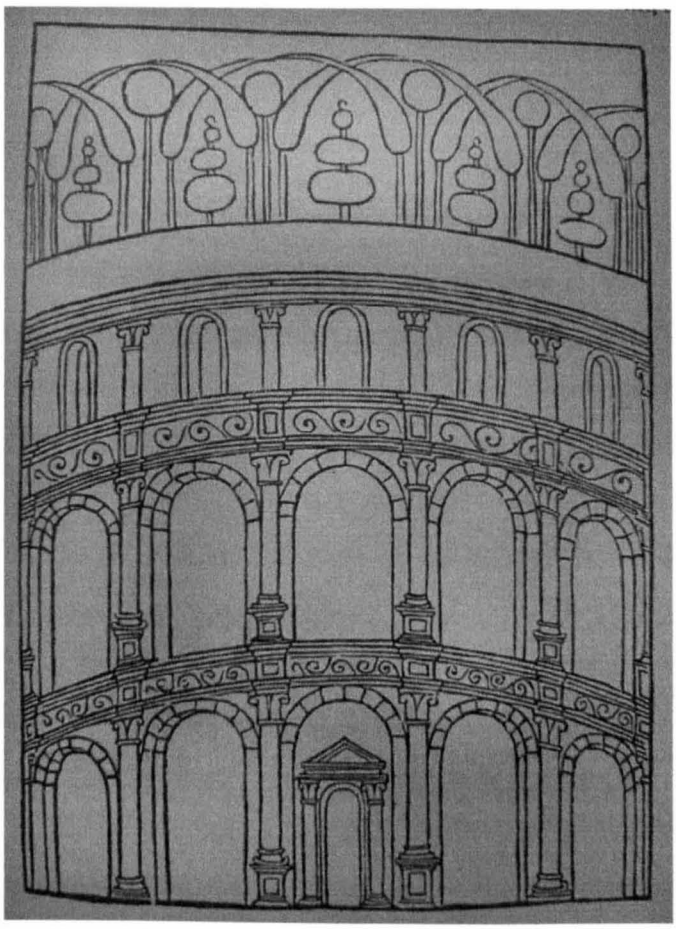
[190] Allen *Ep* 2533:109-13; cf *Ep* 393:18-28, Quoted in *Antibarbari/Parabolae*, p.xxiii.

not, Erasmus is gnomic about what it is. It is not a branch of thinking that deals in matter and measure and time, in the first principles of Plato, or Aristotle, or Pythagoras. It is not about the exterior, material world. The implication is that wisdom is an internal, spiritual attribute; that philosophy is secret, God-given, precious. For all his rationalism, at the heart of Erasmus's philosophy is a recognition that wisdom is granted, not grasped. Camillo and Erasmus shared this, at least, in common. To return to Erasmus's *Adages* with which this essay began – his great profusion and abundance of proverbs – was not so very far from what Camillo achieved in a visual and spatial sense with *L'idea del Theatro*. Where Erasmus created a bricolage of letters, Camillo intended a collage of imagery and myth. Where Erasmus intended to collate every known maxim throughout history, Camillo intended a visual scheme based on a mathematical structuring of language. While Erasmus translated, interpreted and expounded his numerous sources, Camillo synthesized disparate philosophies. This is not to say that Camillo matched Erasmus as the seemingly rational thinker of the age, but that he possessed other knowledge that Erasmus wanted to undermine.

While Camillo was not, like Erasmus, a political animal, this is not to say that he was unconcerned with power. Harnessing spiritual, temporal and personal power was precisely what Camillo cared about and travelled Europe to advocate. Camillo shows us what matters to him in *L'idea del Theatro* when he talks about the ability to predict the time of one's death, or a spiral of love setting everything in the universe in motion, or the transformation of spirit and matter. Illusion, appearance, dissimulation, signs, visions and eternity are what interest Camillo, as well as the skill, Prospero-like, to interpret and orchestrate the symbols and attributes of the world. It is here, I think, that we begin to find the root of Erasmus's charge of paganism. For along with preaching the power of transformation, Camillo also talked about practical steps of how it could be achieved and this, as I shall discuss in the following chapters, was influenced by new developments in perspective and Camillo's understanding of the central position of the sun in the universe.

Chapter Four:

Hypnerotomachia Poliphili

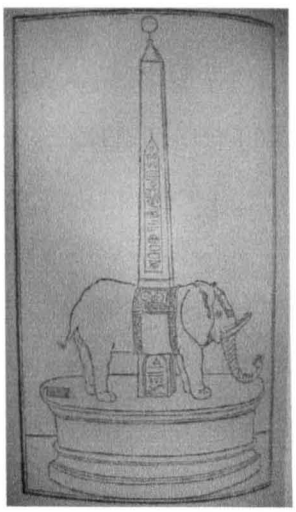


In 1499, Aldus Manutius, the esteemed Venetian printer, broke with his long-held practice of publishing books of a purely scholarly and clearly erudite nature, by printing an anonymous work of fiction called *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili.* Written in a mixture of vernacular Italian and invented Latin, the *Hypnerotomachia* recounts the story of the dream of Poliphilo and the long search for his desire, embodied in the woman, Polia. The book is in two parts. Book one is devoted to the dream-pilgrimage of Poliphilo through the imaginary island of Cytherea in search of Polia, the climax of which is at the Fountain of Venus, situated in the very centre of the island. Book two is mostly related from Polia's perspective and is set in the city of Treviso in northeastern Italy.

The 1499 edition of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* has a warm red cover with a pattern of gold around the edge. The publication was so opulent in fact that Aldus himself, as well as the anonymous author, ended up out of pocket in the enterprise. The book is lavish with images. This is not only inherent in the text itself, as the landscape, layout, temples, statues and monuments of Cytherea are described in fantastic detail, but also in abundant pictorial woodcuts that represent and deepen the textual descriptions. In common with many of Aldus's books, the initial letter of each of the book's thirty-eight chapters is ornately decorated with patterns and knotwork. In 1512, a reader of the *Hypnerotomachia* noted an acrostic made by these thirty-eight initial letters: POLIAM FRATER FRANCISCUS COLUMNA PERAMAVIT ('Brother Francesco Colonna greatly loved Polia'). The reader then scribbled in the margins that the said Brother Colonna 'now lives in Venice at SS. Giovanni e Paolo'[191] (or monastery of Saint John and Saint Paul). The revealed identity of

[191] Colonna, Francesco *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* trans. Joscelyn Godwin (London, Thames & Hudson, 1999), p.xiv. Godwin quotes other possible suggestions for the authorship of the book, although he himself believes it to be by the monk, Colonna. Certain theories have been suggested that Colonna may have been a Roman Prince, the great-nephew of Cardinal Prospero Colonna. This Prince was divested of all wealth and privileges on charges of heresy, and became a Dominican monk for the remainder of his life.

the author links the *Hypnerotomachia* to the Order of Preachers – the Dominicans – with whom Francesco Colonna was a life-long friar.[192]



Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, p. 38.

The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* alongside being a romance, was considered 'throughout the sixteenth century....[to be] an excellent alchemical handbook in which Colonna guides his hero, in the opinion of the poet and alchemist Nicolas Le Digne, into 'la Cabale sainte des Chimiques secrets''.[193] Despite, or perhaps because of, its obscure beginnings the *Hypnerotomachia* was a very popular work and had a conspicuous effect in terms of its influence on visual and literary culture.[194] Daniel Russell notes, 'the hieroglyphic decorations for Renaissance court pageantry were more often inspired by this work than by Horapollo himself'.[195] He goes on to say of these decorations 'one of the best known examples is the elephant and pyramid in the 1548 Lyons entry for Henri II and Catherine de Medicis'. Images of an elephant and

[192] Born around 1433, Colonna was ordained in 1465. He was incorporated at the University of Padua in 1473. See Godwin pp.xiii-xiv for alternative theories as to the author. Godwin believes he was the friar described above.
[193] Russell, Daniel, *Emblematic Structures in Renaissance French Culture,* (Canada, University of Toronto Press, 1995), p.123. Quote from Albert-Marie Schmidt's introduction to his facsimile edition of *Le Songe de Poliphile,* xv-xvi.
[194] See Russell, pp.123-124.
[195] *Ibid.*, p. 124.

a pyramid are significant in Giulio Camillo's *L'idea del Theatro.*[196] But these are not the only correlations between the two books. I think that Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia,* itself a visual and verbal crossword, offers clues to the unravelling of Camillo's idea.

This, and the following chapter, will look at the *Hypnerotomachia* to gain a greater insight into Camillo's *L'idea*. Direct influences can be traced from Colonna to Camillo in a number of striking visual, textual and theoretical correspondences. In this chapter I will discuss Colonna and Camillo in terms of their relationship to emblematic and visual iconography. I will look at two of their shared motifs: the elephant and the three headed wolf, lion and dog, and discuss their respective significances within the text of each book. As mentioned above, the image of the elephant had a wide currency in Europe in the latter part of the sixteenth century, while Panofsky has traced the widespread occurrence in Italy of the image of the wolf, lion and dog, from the fourteenth century (though the origination of both images may be much earlier). Towards the end of the chapter I will discuss the influence Camillo was later to have on emblem literature. Significant sections of Camillo's *L'idea* were later used in parts of Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica* (Basel: 1567), while both Camillo and Colonna were to have an affect on Achille Bocchi's *Symbolicae quaestiones...*(Bologna: 1555).

As mentioned above, Colonna's work is unusual in its opulent use of imagery. There is equivalence, in the economy of the *Hypnerotomachia*, between visual image and textual message. Colonna addresses and expresses theoretical ideas equally from a visual and a textual angle. As I will demonstrate, his methodology provides a progressive, or evolutionary, interpretation of a given symbol or idea. Camillo uses this same technique of progressive interpretation, in a spatial sense, in the Theatre. Both authors favour a message from multiple viewpoints. These are expressed within, on the one hand, Colonna's pastoral and monumental, and on the other,

[196] The image of an elephant, 'the most religious animal of all the beasts' (*L'idea,* p.26) is shown at the Theatre on the levels of Prometheus, and the Banquet, under Mercury. It signifies 'the origin of the mythical gods'.

Camillo's architectural and cosmological settings. Related to, though not identical with, this interpretative system is the mnemonic system described as the memory of '*places* and *images* (*loci* and *imagines*)', which is itself a derivation of Aristotle's *Topics*.[197] I will discuss this in terms of the two works, paying particular regard to Yates's consequent interpretation of Camillo's Theatre.

While there are interpretative similarities and conspicuous correspondences in terms of specific symbolic motifs, the two books are very different in their underlying structural form: Camillo's *L'idea,* as I discuss in Chapter Six, is a scientific treatise based on the spatial description of a cosmic model, whereas the *Hypnerotomachia,* at least on the surface, is a fantastic linear narrative. Nevertheless, as I discuss in Chapter Five, both men, in their different ways, are aiming to express a similar vision – Colonna: visual and narrative; Camillo: visual and scientific. I have decided to look at these issues through the lens of Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia* not because the authors share similar motifs (though they do) but *because* of the difference of their textual forms.

Hypnerotomachia Poliphili[198]

The *Hypnerotomachia* begins with Poliphilo falling asleep beside a 'calm and silent shore'.[199] He dreams that he enters a frightening forest,[200] in which, among other things, he finds a pyramid, a colossus and an elephant, and is

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[197] Yates, p.2; Carruthers, p.71.

[198] See Appendix III for Colonna's own description. I give a synopsis of Book One only, here, as Book Two is not relevant to the discussion.

[199] *Hypnerotomachia,* p.11.

[200] This is the Hercynian Forest. In the Forest, he says, the trees 'would not allow the sun's welcome rays to reach the damp soil, but covered it like a vaulted roof with dense leaves that the nurturing light could not penetrate' (*Hypnerotomachia,* p.13). There 'was nothing but the lairs of dangerous beasts and caverns full of noxious creatures and fierce monsters'(*Hypnerotomchia,* p.14). Here we find the first correlation with Camillo, who, early in *L'idea,* uses the metaphor of a wood to describe the Inferior, Celestial and Supercelestial worlds. He says:

> If we were in a great wood and wished to see the whole of it well, staying in it, we would be unable to satisfy our wish, since we would be able to see only a small part of the view about us, the trees around blocking for us the view of things far off. (*L'idea,* pp. 11-12).

We must find an incline, he says, and rise to the top of a hill in order to recognize the shape of the landscape. The wood represents our 'Inferior world'; the incline, the 'Heavens'; and the hill, the 'Supercelestial world' (*L'idea,* p.7).

scared by a dragon. He escapes the dragon, and is met by the Nymphs of the Five Senses, who lead him into the realm of Queen Eleuterylida (or Free-will). At Eleuterylida's castle he passes through the portals attended by Cinosia, Indalomena and Mnemosyna into the inner courtyard, where the walls are adorned with images of the planets. He journeys on in the company of Logistica and Thelemia and arrives at three doorways carved out of hewn rock. He decides to enter the middle doorway, named Erotrophos. He meets and falls in love with a nymph, who leads him on the rest of his journey. They witness the triumphs of Europa, Danae, Bacchus and Leda[201] processing past Jupiter. They enter the Temple of Venus where the High Priestess ceremoniously unites Poliphilo with his accompanying nymph, who was Polia all along. Two turtle doves and two white male swans are sacrificed from which 'a rose-bush grows miraculously with fruits and flowers'.[202] Poliphilo, Polia and the High Priestess taste the fruit. Poliphilo goes to look at some ruins and an ancient temple, before Cupid arrives in a boat to take him, and Polia, to the island of Cytherea. Poliphilo describes Cytherea: a perfectly circular island divided by rivers, meadows and hedges of orange, citrus and myrtle. He tells of the 'Procession of Honour in which Cupid was seated on the Triumphal Vehicle, and Polia and Poliphilo followed, bound together; and they came with great pomp to the gate of the marvellous Amphitheatre'.[203] He describes 'the wonderful artifice of Venus's Fountain in the centre of the Theatre, and how the Curtain was torn and he saw the Divine Mother in her majesty'.[204] Mars arrives and they leave the Theatre, coming at last to the tomb of Adonis, Venus's beloved.

Joscelyn Godwin, Francesco Colonna's translator into English, says that the language of the *Hypnerotomachia* 'is so strange and idiosyncratic that there is truly no parallel to it in literature. It could probably only have been forged at this particular time, in a climate of linguistic uncertainty.'[205] Colonna managed

[201] All of whom, apart from Leda, are mentioned in Camillo's Theatre.
[202] *Hypnerotomachia*, p.224.
[203] *Ibid.*, p.326.
[204] *Ibid.*, p.358.
[205] *Ibid.*, p.ix.

to combine 'Italian syntax with a Latin vocabulary'[206] in a work that even Godwin says at times is unreadable. Colonna (like Camillo) has had his fair share of detractors. Recently, for example, Simon Schama described Colonna's language as mediocre, while Yates dismissed his work as a 'wild imaginative indulgence'.[207] While the style of Colonna's prose may leave something to be desired and lightweight as the *Hypnerotomachia* may appear (in content rather than form – the book is nearly five hundred pages long), it has also stimulated more considered responses. Jung, for example, discusses the work in terms of its connection to memory and to archetypal imagery, the anima and the unconscious, saying that the text was 'rightly regarded [during the Renaissance] as a mystery text'.[208] The language of the work is interesting from a purely historical perspective in terms of Colonna's manipulation of Latin with Italian. Camillo devoted much of his time to noting and charting vernacular differentiations in the region of the Veneto, and himself chose to write in Italian, though he does not go so far as Colonna in creating an individualistic or idiosyncratic language. He does, however, discuss the necessity of constructing new words in order to develop new concepts.[209] Colonna pillaged from *De architectura* of Vitruvius and Leon Battista Alberti's *De re aedificatoria,* to help embellish the lavish descriptions he gives of architecture, monuments and gardens, though, as Godwin says, while the *Hypnerotomachia* 'may be a landmark in the history of architectural writing...it is not the manual of a practitioner.'[210] Many of these architectural motifs were to find there way into the work of Camillo[211] as I shall discuss further in Chapter Five.

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[206] *Ibid.*, p.ix.

[207] Yates, p.123. Schama, Simon, *Landscape and Memory,* (London: Fontana Press, 1995), p.272. Schama says that the text is 'compensated for by the haunting peculiarity of the woodcut illustrations, executed by an unknown artist'. The artist in question may have been Giulio Bonasone, as I later discuss.

[208] Jung, Carl, *Psychology and Alchemy,* trans., R.F.C. Hull, (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1980), p.86.

[209] See Camillo, *Trattato dell' Imitazione,* Appendix I, where he mentions the arts of 'medicine, agriculture, the military' in this regard.

[210] *Hypnerotomachia,* p.xii.

[211] Aside from the important motif of the Theatre itself in *L'idea,* Camillo uses architectural metaphors at length in *Trattato dell' Imitazione.*

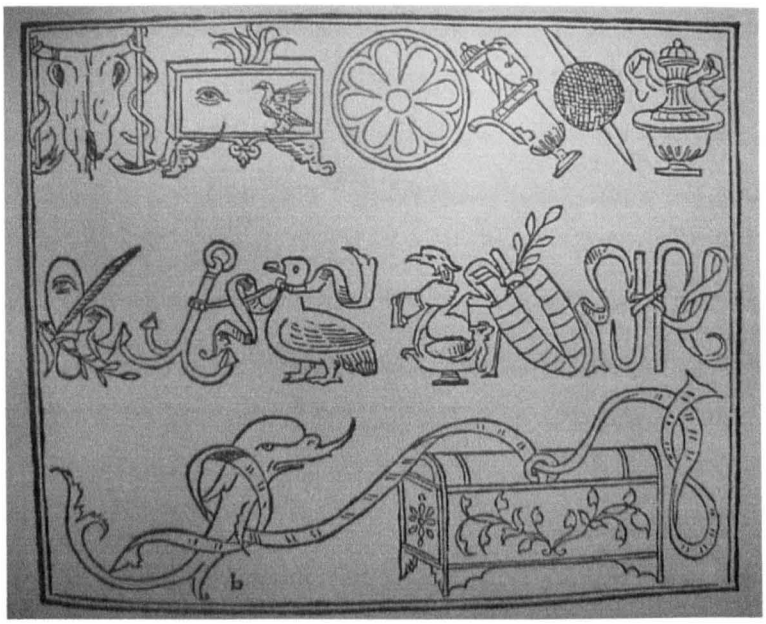
The *Hypnerotomachia* is prolix in allegorical wordplay. The title of Colonna's work is an amalgam of three Greek words: *hypnos* (sleep), *eros* (love), and *mache* (strife). The protagonist's name, Poliphilo, means 'lover of many'. The first named encounter is with Queen Eleuterylida, or 'free-will' and subsequently Poliphilo meets a succession of allegorically named characters. Godwin's translation lists the names of the allegorical characters in order of appearance in an appendix at the end of the book. The list itself reads like a poem-pilgrimage through a sensual and moral landscape, beginning with free-will and ending with Algerea, or 'sorrow-bearer', the servant of Diana's Temple.

An example of Colonna's textual use of the sign, along with its visual equivalent, can be seen in his description of the base of the sculpture of the elephant and pyramid, mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. I will give it here in full as it gives a good flavour of the language of the book. Poliphilo says:

> ...I saw the following hieroglyphs engraved in a suitable style around the porphyry base. First, the horned skull of a bull with two agricultural tools tied to the horns; then an altar resting on two goat's feet, with a burning flame and, on its face, an eye and a vulture. Next, a washing basin and a ewer; then a ball of string transfixed by a spindle, and an antique vase with its mouth stopped. There was a sole with an eye, crossed by two branches, one of laurel and the other of palm, neatly tied; an anchor, and a goose; an antique lantern, with a hand holding it; an ancient rudder, bound up together with a fruited olive-branch; then two hooks, a dolphin, and lastly a closed coffer.[212]

Poliphilo explains that the 'hieroglyphs' that he has just described in the text were 'carved in the following graphic form'; and this image is inserted into the text:

[212] *Hypnerotomachia*, p.41.



Colonna provides us with an interpretation of these 'ancient and sacred writings'. He says:

> FROM YOUR LABOUR TO THE GOD OF NATURE SACRIFICE FREELY. GRADUALLY YOU WILL MAKE YOUR SOUL SUBJECT TO GOD. HE WILL HOLD THE FIRM GUIDANCE OF YOUR LIFE, MERCIFULLY GOVERNING YOU, AND WILL PRESERVE YOU UNHARMED.[213]

My own breakdown of the interpretation of each of the hieroglyphic images follows. (Obviously my interpretation of the hieroglyphic images has been influenced by Colonna's textual translation of, or key to, the system. Nevertheless, once provided with the key to the internal logic of the hieroglyphic system, subsequent examples of the code become much easier to decipher: which presumably Colonna intended in the first place.) The animal's skull is sacrifice, the agricultural tools, labour. The altar with the goat's feet is the altar of the god of nature, represented by the feet. The eye, the burning flame and the vulture show that it is being tended, guarded and watched. The washing basin and ewer shows the purification of the soul. The string transfixed with a spindle shows the guiding principle of god in the long and winding ways of life (a similar motif appears in Camillo, incidentally, when he talks about garments constructed from a 'mass of unworked wool', though,

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[213] *Ibid.*, p.41.

here Camillo is discussing the creation of the earth). The antique vase with its mouth stopped, old memories and grudges, stilled. The sole with an eye shows that the follower will be led in the walk of life by the guidance of god, the laurel and palm show that this will be victorious and peaceful; the anchor linked to the goose, the hand to the antique vase and the rudder to the fruited olive branch show that all paths through life, present, past and future are well balanced and guided. The hooks may be symbolic of capture, perhaps capturing the following images. The dolphin and the coffer represent the god of the sea and the fullness and richness of the earth as well as the unknown.

It should be noted that this is only the inscription on the base of the sculpture of the elephant. The significance of the elephant itself, with the obelisk on its back, is not explained by Colonna in the text, which is not to say that they do not have a symbolic meaning. As I shall shortly discuss, Colonna has several 'categories' of symbolic motifs, some of which he interprets textually, and some of which he leaves as purely visual signs. The example above, of the text, hieroglyphs and interpretation at the base of the sculpture, comes early in the book. Colonna has placed it here, I think, in order that the reader is prepared to imbue the rest of the visual images in the book with the same degree of interpretative depth.

The visual elements of Colonna's narrative could be said to fall into several broad categories: hieroglyphic signs like the one above; visual representations of ancient text;[214] descriptive 'pictures' of action;[215] drawings of architectural monuments or features.[216] These are very tentative distinctions and all of them overlap - hieroglyphic or emblematic motifs find their way into 'pictures' for example[217] - but I think that it may be a useful distinction to make in terms of Colonna's influence on Camillo. Aside from their mnemonic function, which I will later discuss, each one of these visual elements provides a subtly different function within the story. For example, as discussed above, the hieroglyphs exhibit their own inherent specific

[214] E.g. p.169, p.213.
[215] E.g. p.18, p.76.
[216] E.g. p.26, p.129.
[217] E.g. the 'wolf, lion and dog' emblem in the picture of the procession, as discussed below.

iconographic grammar. The distinction between the meaning inherent in a hieroglyph and in other visual iconographic systems (and in what the distinction between these are in the first place) opens the gates to a vast semantic field which it is outwith the scope of this work to discuss. It also begs the question of how, and in what way, the experience of meaning is changed from a textual and a visual perspective. Colonna's work - as an example of the liminal place between text and image – is, I think, in this respect, extraordinary.

Colonna's narrative cannot be understood without reference to his visual grammar. Visual signs are to be understood, to be 'read', in the same terms as text; the reading of the hieroglyphs and visual motifs is an integral part of the story itself: it moves the story on in time. We cannot get from point A to point B without taking into account the importance – the literal significance – of the image. Colonna is not content to express an idea from one viewpoint, but uses text, image and interpretation. This approach reinforces the fact that he intends there to be a progressive element to the interpretation of visual and textual signs. The image has 'plot-value'. For Camillo, likewise, we need to understand his images in terms of their significance over time. Camillo's images are not static like butterflies pinned on a board. He adopts a similar system to Colonna of progressive interpretation of an image. In the Theatre, ideas, in graphic form, are presented from multiple viewpoints. The same image may appear at a different place within the Theatre and therefore be imbued with a subtly different meaning. In a sense, images are invested with 'compound interest' as they appear at different positions within the system. Camillo's treatment of the image of the elephant, which he shares with Colonna, exemplifies the structure.

This simplified visual diagram shows the positioning of the seven levels in the Theatre. The planet of Mercury is shown at the bottom, with waving yellow lines to represent its influence. The Banquet is nearest to Mercury, and Prometheus is furthest away.

The elephant, 'the most religious animal of all the beasts'[218] is described at two levels in the Theatre: on the outermost, at the level of Prometheus and at the innermost level, the level of the 'simples', the Banquet. At the Banquet Camillo says the elephant signifies 'the origin of the mythical gods' while at Prometheus, it represents 'the religion of the mythical gods'. The level of the Banquet is where the two essential productions of God originate: the 'eternal' word, and 'primary matter' which is 'in time',[219] while the outermost, or Promethean, level of the Theatre is 'assigned to all the arts, noble as well as vile',[220] as discussed in Chapter Two. The image of the elephant appears under the influence of Mercury, messenger of the gods, and the planet that 'appertains to ...language and the telling of tales'.[221] Religion, therefore, root and flower, is to be understood as a part of language. The progression represented through the levels of the Banquet to Prometheus, is a gradual gradation from nature to art, essence to artifice, from idea to human skill. When the elephant is represented, its significance evolves according to its position. At the level of the Banquet it represents the being, the origin, or source, of the gods, while, at Prometheus, it represents the human show, or manifestation, of the origin, in religion.

Elephants are mentioned in the *Hieroglyphics* of Horapollo. Aldus published this in 1505, six years after his publication of the *Hypnerotomachia.* Camillo

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[218] *L'idea,* p.26.
[219] 'the one from within the essence of His divinity...is that of the word', which is eternal; the other 'production [is] from without....[which is] primary matter, *L'idea,* p.17.
[220] *Ibid.*, p.79.
[221] *Ibid.*, p.26.

may well have been influenced by the work of Horapollo, and certainly his textual-images have a hieroglyphic feel. But I think that Camillo's interpretation of the elephant is closer in fact to Colonna's. Horapollo describes the elephant in terms of a 'A Powerful Man [who] knows what is Right',[222] or in the case of an elephant and a ram: 'A King that flees from Folly and Intemperance'.[223] Horapollo's elephants are more concerned with temporal power than Camillo's version.[224] Camillo's interpretation of a religious animal is nearer to Colonna's enigmatic representation.

Camillo and Colonna share the image of the three-headed wolf, lion and dog. Panofsky has shown this image to represent time: past, present and future. Camillo explicitly equates the image with what he terms 'Saturnine' time; Colonna on the other hand is not explicit in his meaning, though he equates the image with the Egyptian god Serapis. I think it is useful in the terms of this image to understand Mircea Eliade's distinction, within 'archaic ontology', of what he calls 'profane' and 'mythical' time.[225] (Eliade's definition of what constitutes 'archaic', or 'primitive', is itself based not only on what has happened in the past, or in history, but in what he perceives as man's innate response to 'being'.[226] He gives an example of the 'mythicization' of an actual historical event – the expedition against Poland in 1499 by Malkoš Pasha – in which almost nothing of the facts of the case were preserved in the ensuing historical ballad but were transformed instead into 'mythical action'.[227] He

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[222] Horapollo *The Hieroglyphics* trans by Alexander Turner Cory (London, William Pickering, DCCCXL) Book 3, LXXXIV, p.137.
[223] *Ibid.*, p.138.
[224] It is interesting that a publication in England, of 1596, in which the writings of 'divers Latine Authors' were (anonymously) represented also makes use of the image of the elephant. In Thomas Johnson's *Cornucopia, or Diverse Secrets: Wherein is contained the rare secrets in Man, Beasts, Foules, Fishes, Trees, Plantes, stones and such like...* (London: William Barley, 1596), the author says: 'The Elephant though never so outrage[d], yet seeing a Ram is often tamed'. Amongst many other animals, he talks about lions and wolves, which form a part of the next image shared by Colonna and Camillo. Johnson says:

> The Lion is thought to be tamed by none other means than with burned firebrands, which he utterly detesteth and is a feared of: the Wolf, who feareth neither staff nor iron, yet the casting of a stone is so contrary to him, that in the same place where he is hit with a stone are worms engendered.

Johnson's short work is unillustrated, like Camillo's, but the text-images that he describes have their roots in earlier work such as Horapollo's, which used the visual sign as the message-medium.
[225] Eliade, Mircea, trans. Willard R. Trask, *The Myth of Eternal Return,* (London: Arkana, 1989), p.35.
[226] See Eliade, pp. 87-92.
[227] *Ibid.*, p.39.

provides a number of further case studies up to the twentieth century.[228]) Profane time, according to Eliade, is situated in history; it is unrepeatable and linear. Mythical time, on the other hand, situated outwith history, is renewable and transcendent. The tendency throughout the Middle Ages and beyond, which gained increasing adherence, was the 'immanentization' of the mythical theory, which survived alongside 'the new conception of linear progress'.[229] Mythical time, unlike 'linear progress', was capable of 'resumption...from the beginning, that is, a repetition of the cosmogony.' Eliade cites the Saturnalia and other examples of ritualistic events that denoted 'a repetition of the mythical moment of the passage from chaos to cosmos.'[230]

Camillo and Colonna's respective images of the wolf, lion and dog are best understood in terms of 'mythical time'. Eliade's distinction between a time that is common, linear and quantifiable and a time that is common, mythic, and immeasurable is helpful, here. Camillo explicitly makes a similar comparison between the time that is represented by the relationship of the earth to the sun, which is quantifiable, to the time represented at the level of Saturn, which is a more complex, and in a sense, more introvert relationship. For both authors, as I will discuss, the image of the wolf, lion and dog represents the subjective form that time takes; it is not days, minutes and hours as they are generally measured, nor even the seasons, but internal time, measured in subjective experience and memories. It is the time of the 'interior man'.

[228] *Ibid.*, pp. 44-46.
[229] *Ibid.*, p.145.
[230] *Ibid.*, p.54.

Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, p.345.

Just before Poliphilo and Polia reach the culmination of their journey, they take part in a fabulous 'Procession of Honour', when a 'numberless host of demi-goddesses bearing gifts and noble nymphs of especial beauty trooped up...with a great display of ornaments and pomp'.[231] Each of these gifts and displays is meticulously described, and several are shown as drawings. The final display, carried with 'especial devotion and resolute awe'[232] shows the three faces of a wolf, a lion, and a dog; the image was Egyptian in origin, denoting the monstrous animal that accompanied the god, Serapis. Knowledge of the animal was brought to the attention of a Western readership through Macrobius's *Saturnalia,* in which it is mentioned.:

> Next to the god a huge, strange monster sits,
> Its triple-throated face turned up to him
> In friendly manner. On the right it looks
> A dog and on the left, a grasping wolf;
> Midway a lion. And a curling snake
> Conjoins these heads: they mean the fleeting times.[233]

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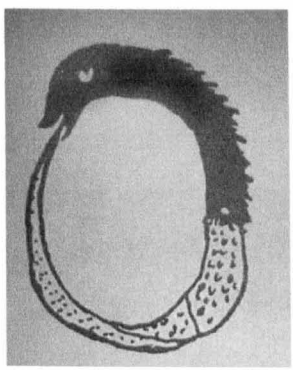
[231] *Hypnerotomachia*, p.326.
[232] *Ibid.*, p.344.
[233] Petrarch, *Africa,* III, 156, quoted in Panofsky, Erwin, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (London, Penguin, 1993), p.191. Panofsky discusses the image in relation to Titian's *Allegory of Prudence*, in which he charts Western appearances of this image from the fourteenth century (Panofsky, plate 31). Panofsky says that it was 'in connexion with the image of Apollo rather than Serapis that our monster was revived in subsequent literary descriptions'. This, however, is not the case with either Colonna or Camillo.

Panofsky has charted the appearance of the image through the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. One of the earliest is the frontispiece to Franchinus Gaforius's *Practica musicae* printed at Milan in 1496. This Allegory of Music shows a picture of Apollo with a lyre seated on a throne above the tail of a long winding snake. The snake descends through the layer of the fixed stars and the planets, the Aristotelian levels of fire, air and water to the earth itself, in which it culminates in the faces of a wolf, a lion and a dog. The implication is that eternal divine influence is imparted to the earth through the aegis of current, past and future time. The 'Uroboros', or world snake, is represented in Horapollo as a 'symbol of the aeon',[234] though the image had been known in the west for centuries. The Codex Marcianus, dating from the tenth or eleventh century shows the symbol with the legend 'the One, the All'.[235]



Uroboros, *Codex Marcianus,* (11th Century)[236]

In Camillo's Theatre, there are three representations of the wolf, lion and dog image all of which appear under the influence of the planet of Saturn. They appear on the levels of the Cave, Pasiphae, and the Sandals of Mercury. Camillo specifically names Macrobius as his source for the image, saying that Macrobius wanted to 'illustrate the three times, that is, the past, present and future'.[237] He says:

> ...the wolf signified time past, because he has already devoured it...the lion is the present...because present troubles thus encountered, strike terror in us, which the face of a lion would do if it overcame us...the

[234] Jung, p.46.
[235] *Ibid.*, p.293.
[236] *Ibid.*, p.293.
[237] *L'idea,* p.46.

dog indicates future time, because in the manner of a fawning dog, the future always promises us something better.

The interpretation of the image changes as it moves through the different levels of the Theatre. At the most basic, or elemental level, that is: at the Cave, it represents Saturnine time, in general. 'Saturnine time' is discreet from 'solar time'. Solar time is quantitative; it is calculated by the 'nearness or distance [of an object] from the sun... [or] by the course of the sun'. The seasons, the hours, the minutes and the years are dictated, therefore, by the sun. (It is significant that Camillo should choose the sun as the unit of measurement of linear time, rather than the Moon. The Moon, in its cyclical periods, had for centuries been commonly used as the basis of time measurement. In 1514, however, as deliberations for calendar reform were underway, issues regarding the respective positions of the Sun and Moon to the earth were critical.[238]) Saturnine time is a more fluid, broader conception, for Camillo, than solar time. In discussing the life-cycle of an organism he talks about the 'length of time the union of the mixed stay together', bound by spirit, until 'dissolution'[239] (in other words, the length of time in which the elements of an organism are alive); this is Saturnine time. It is based on an individual's consciousness, rather than the collective need for a common reference point.

As the first time that the image of the wolf, lion and dog appears is at the level of the Cave, the subsequent appearances need to be interpreted in this light. At the level of Pasiphae, Camillo states that the image is differentiated to mean 'man being subject to time'. We know that this is Saturnine, rather than solar time. This means that we should not interpret 'man's subjection' to time in the sense of clock-watching, or measurement, but rather in organic, less quantifiable terms, such as the ebbs and flows of relationships (relationships in the broadest sense, from the microcosmic level to macrocosmic). Moving on to the image under the Sandals of Mercury, we need to interpret it not only in terms of the Cave, but now also in terms of Pasiphae. Camillo explicitly says that the image means man 'delaying, postponing, [bringing] to an

[238] Regarding the Moon as a measure of cyclical time, see Eliade, pp. 86-88.
[239] *L'idea*, p.51.

end...'.[240] We can say, therefore, that under the Sandals of Mercury, it signifies the propensity within human beings to slow down or to cease relational activities.[241] At each position the emphasis of interpretation has changed. At the Cave, the focus is on the planet Saturn's relationship to the concept of time. At Pasiphae, where the agency of man is brought into the equation, the emphasis has shifted, but is still focussed on the planet and its means of control, rather than human self-determination. At the Sandals of Mercury, where the Theatre has gone one further step away from spirit towards matter, the emphasis is on man himself, actively engaged in activities that are concerned with time.

Triumphal Procession, with the image of the wolf, lion and dog in the right hand panel[242]

Colonna explicitly equates the image of the wolf, lion and dog with Serapis, although he does not proffer an explanation of its interpretation. It is significant that the image should appear at such an important place in the Colonna narrative. The Triumphal Procession has taken twenty-one pages to describe; the wolf, lion and dog is the final image to be explained before the 'triumphant host' arrive at their destination, where they pass through a portal created by the 'spraying [of] scented water'[243] and are admitted into the presence of the great Mother Goddess, Venus, where the arrows of her divine Son, Cupid, wound Poliphilo and Polia's hearts. Why would Colonna place

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[240] *L'idea*, p.47.
[241] Relational activities themselves might be said to be almost all human activities.
[242] *Hypnerotomachia*, pp. 346-347.
[243] *Ibid.*, p.346.

the image of the wolf, lion and dog here, at this pivotal point? Could it be that the hero and heroine have reached a place where Colonna wishes the whole of time to be represented? The linear aspect of Poliphilo and Polia's journey has come to a point of culmination: they have reached their journey's end before the final revelatory ritual. The sign of the wolf, lion and dog shows that this should be understood not only in terms of the linear progress from the thicket in the woods to the temple of the gods, but also in terms of the protagonists' subjective, internal journey from confusion to clarity.

I hope that in the examples I have looked at above, it will be clear how for both Colonna's and Camillo's works, the interpretation of each image is dependent on its relative position within the rest of the schema as a whole: either Colonna's narrative structure, or Camillo's Theatre. Both authors rely on interpretative progression for their message; in a sense, the images' interpretations are space and time dependent. Chapter Five will look further at some of the pastoral and monumental motifs that are shared by Colonna and Camillo. But now I will discuss their work in terms of the tradition of the Topics, and of mnemonic systems. The final part of this chapter will look at ways in which Camillo and Colonna may have contributed to later emblematic literature.

On one level, Camillo and Colonna's images can be understood in terms of a mnemonic system of '*places* and *images* (*loci* and *imagines*)'.[244] Memory systems, as discussed by Yates, Bolzoni and Carruthers, have been dealt with so thoroughly that I will not go into detail here. The source for the use of memory systems can be found in a number of ancient texts: Cicero's *De Oratore,* parts of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium,* (an anonymous text book, thought erroneously in the Medieval period to be by Cicero), Quintilian's *Institutio*[245] and Aristotle's *Topics.* Before the advent of print, the use of a trained memory was understandably deemed to be a useful tool. Thomas Aquinas went so far as to make it a moral necessity, saying that it was an

[244] Yates, p.2.
[245] See Carruthers, p. 72.

attribute of the virtue of Prudence.[246] One ancient mnemonic system, variations of which have survived up to the present day, suggests 'the technique of visualizing objects in a dramatic way'. In the 1980s, Tony Buzan's adaptation of old and familiar mnemonic methods was made popular with a BBC television series and accompanying book that promoted 'memory aerobics',[247] for example. 'Practise stretching your imagination by giving any group of objects a more theatrical context,' [248] says Dominic O'Brien, inventor of the DOMINIC system,[249] whose 'own techniques...have helped [him] become (and stay) World Memory Champion'.[250]

The text from the *Ad Herrenium,* (*circa* 86-82 B.C.) from which O'Brien's twenty-first century enthusiasm may, circuitously, have evolved reads:

> ...if we set up images that are not many or vague but active (*imagines agentes);* if we assign to them exceptional beauty or singular ugliness; if we ornament some of them, as with crowns or purple cloaks, so that the similitude may be more distinct to us; or if we somehow disfigure them, as by introducing one stained with blood or soiled with mud or smeared with red paint, so that its form is more striking, or by assigning certain comic effects to our images...that, too, will ensure our remembering them more readily...[251]

The advice in the *Ad Herrenium,* confirmed by Cicero's *De Oratore,* was adapted over the years into what Carruthers calls an 'architectural mnemonic' in which a building (of any description) was imagined, inside which, in different rooms, or beside particular pillars or corners, statues or other striking images were placed to give visual aides to the memory. The building was the stable element in the scheme, while the images inside it could change according to the thing that was being remembered. The architectural mnemonic was in

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[246] See Carruthers, pp. 4 –5 for an account of Thomas's own extraordinary use of memory: 'contemporary sources suggest strongly that the entire *Summa theologica* was composed mentally and dictated from memory'.
[247] Buzan, Tony, *Use Your Memory,* (London: BBC Books, 1996), p.8.
[248] O' Brien, Dominic, *The Amazing Memory Book,* (London: Duncan Laird Publishers, 2001), p.18. See also, for example, Markowitz, Karen & Jensen, Eric, *The Great Memory Book,* (USA: The Brain Store, Inc., 1999). Minds maps and memory aides are big business.
[249] 'Decipherment of Mnemonically Interpreted Numbers Into Characters'. See O'Brien, pp.32-35 for an in-depth analysis.
[250] *Ibid.*, p.10.
[251] *Ad Herennium,* III, xxii, quoted in Yates, p.10.

vogue until around the first century A.D. when it 'declined in popularity and was considered cumbersome and gimmicky'.[252] It then made a spectacular comeback in the thirteenth century with endorsements by both Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus. The name of the Dominican order, of which Aquinas and Albertus were luminaries, often appears in relation to the creation of mnemonic systems throughout the Medieval period and into the Renaissance, although the Franciscans and other orders were also active in the field. They devised not only architectural mnemonic systems, but others that relied on numerical or alphabetical grids, or on visual imagery. Yates goes so far as to discuss the paintings on the walls of the Chapter House of the Dominican convent of Santa Maria Novella, in Florence, in terms of memory images,[253] as well as Giotto's representations of the virtues and vices in the Scrovegni Chapel at Padua.[254]

The doctrine of the Topics was central to Medieval philosophy. Mary Carruthers has called the *topica* 'the construction material for thoughts'.[255] Green-Pederson charts the effect of the doctrine of the *topics* in Medieval thinking. Derived partly from Aristotle's *Topics,* and partly from the *Rhetorica,* 'Dialectical inferences or arguments [were] characterized... by being based on something which in Greek is called a *topos* and in Latin a *locus.*' [256] It was only through dialectic predicated on topics that 'a true and infallible knowledge of the world' could be obtained, while the efficacy of subjects such as mathematics, for example, was suspect. As Green-Pederson is at pains to point out, however, the *topos,* or *locus,* was not an easy thing to define: literally it meant 'place' but it could also mean 'commonplace', or, sometimes, 'topic'.[257] By the 12th century, the *loci,* according to Green-Pederson, had

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[252] Carruthers, p.122.
[253] Yates, pp. 79-80.
[254] *Ibid.*, pp. 92-94.
[255] Carruthers, p.34.
[256] *Ibid.*,p.15.
[257] Green-Pederson, Niels Jørgen, *The Tradition of the Topics in the Middle Ages,* (Munich: Philosophia Verlag, 1984), p.20.

reached the status of 'universals', meaning that they were not only 'simply part of our language', but were themselves 'entities of a sort'. [258]

In discussing *topoi,* Yates quotes from Aristotle's *Topics:*

> For...a person with a trained memory, a memory of things themselves is immediately caused by the mere mention of their places (τόποι)... these habits.... will make a man readier in reasoning, because he has the premises classified before his mind's eye, each under its number.[259]

Yates interprets the passage as follows:

> There can be no doubt that these *topoi* used by persons with a trained memory must be mnemonic *loci,* and it is indeed probable that the very word 'topics' as used in dialectics arose through the place of mnemonics. Topics are the 'things' or subject matter of dialectic which came to be known as *topoi* through the places in which they were stored.[260]

Yates's conflation of the dialectical *topoi* with mnemonic *loci* confuses the end, and the means to the end. While mnemonic techniques (whether or not these involved the adoption of *loci)* may have been essential during the era before the advent of print in remembering the ingredients of a dialectical argument or proposition, the mnemonics themselves were only tools. Granted, they were important tools – but they were not 'universals'. The 'universals' (despite the slipperiness in defining them) were the outcomes of a reasoned dialectic; or were at least the dialectical 'givens', or stages, within an argument leading to an outcome (or if not an outcome, then at least a further 'given', or *topos*). That these may sometimes have been brought (internally) to the mind of a thinker by the means of graphic imagery does not make the image itself the *topos.* In other words, in terms of a medieval dialectical proposition posited in terms of an internal set of mnemonic imagery, the medium should not be confused with the message.

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[258] *Ibid,* p.164.
[259] *Topica,* 163b 20-22 (translated by W.S. Hett in the Loeb volume containing the *De anima, Parva naturalia,* etc., 1935), quoted in Yates, p.31.
[260] Yates, p.31.

According to Aristotle's statement, a trained memory 'will make a man readier in reasoning', as he will have facts and relevant logical stages of an argument at his mental fingertips. It is the *reasoning,* the logic leading from one *topos* to another that is the issue. The utility of the two hundred images described in Camillo's Theatre, therefore, is twofold. On the one hand, as memory aides, the images encapsulate ideas for further exposition (this is the view of the Theatre, as expressed by Yates). On the other hand, the images are stages within a reasoned proposition, the interpretation of which is dependent on the image's precise position within the overall schema, as discussed above. The particular space that an image occupies within the Theatre will affect the interpretation and meaning of the image itself. A recurring image will alter in meaning subject to its position and the surrounding influences. A correlation can be seen in the *Hypnerotomachia.* The narrative logic of the book is expressed by the progress of the protagonist, Poliphilo, through a symbol-laden landscape. The significance of the symbolic-images is subject to the place and time that it occurs in Poliphilo's journey. Likewise, for Camillo: the narrative logic of his proposition is expressed through the place and time that an image occurs in the Theatre.

In her wide-ranging account, Yates looks at mnemonic systems from the classical period, and assesses Camillo's *L'idea del Theatro* in this light, calling it a 'momentous transformation' of the art of memory. [261] Camillo's descriptions of imagery – an account that takes up about a third of *L'idea* – certainly fulfil Yates's definition of good memory images; but I do not think they should be regarded as the *point* of the book. Each image, as discussed above, is imbued with meaning and points the way to further exegesis. Every image is important. It could even be said, as Gatti recently said of Giordano Bruno's work, that Camillo's images are 'the 'doors' through which one may understand the formal structure underlying the phenomenological world.'[262] But it is the overall structure and the relationships *between* the images on which Camillo concentrates his focus, in *L'idea.* Yates herself must have been drawn to the structure of the Theatre to prompt her to devise the plan that is at

[261] Yates, p.160.
[262] Gatti, p.173.

the centre of her *The Art of Memory.* But while mnemonic techniques were known and used by Camillo as a useful tool - it is not the subject of his book..

In studying the proliferation of mnemonic techniques during the Medieval period, it is, ironically, easy to forget that mental gymnastics was not primarily the point of the exercise. They were merely means to an end. Neil MacGregor discusses 'some of the most celebrated paintings in Western art' at the Dominican convent of San Marco in Florence not as memory aides, (nor even 'principally as objects of beauty') but as 'visual instruments of instruction'.[263] MacGregor analyses Fra Angelico's depiction, at the convent, of the Crucifixion in this light. Showing Dominic, the founder of the Order of Preachers, at the foot of the Cross, 'The scene is bare, with only sky-blue for background, and no other participants but ourselves.' MacGregor goes on:

> Fra Angelico has not pictured an anecdote from the life of St. Dominic any more than he has painted the actual Crucifixion...what is shown is the object of Dominic's prayerful meditation. We are allowed to see what he sees in his mind's eye...[264]

Macgregor subsequently discusses an example of a Franciscan devotional booklet from around 1330-40. This tiny ivory and gold inlaid book shows scenes from the Passion. The final four panels present the 'hieroglyphic reminders'[265] of the *Arma Christi*:

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[263] MacGregor, Neil, with Erika Langmuir, *Seeing Salvation,*(London: BBC Worldwide Ltd., 2000), p.153.

[264] MacGregor, p.153. MacGregor differentiates Fra Angelico's images at San Marco from 'the images of the classical art of memory', saying 'they are not 'mental' but actually exist as paintings; and they are not, as in antiquity, invented by the person using them, but part of a wide and pre-established tradition' (p.157). I agree that there are differences between Fra Angelico's images and, for example, hieroglyphic/mnemonic systems such as those developed by Romberch (see Yates, p. 117), but I would not choose the same reasons as MacGregor.

[265] Finaldi, Gabriele, with intro. by Neil MacGregor, *The Image of Christ,* the catalogue of the exhibition *Seeing Salvation,* (London: National Gallery Company, Ltd., distributed by Yale university Press, 2000), p.158.

Arma Christi

Elephant ivory with painted and gilded leaves. Height: 10.5cm; Width: 5.9cm (each leaf).
London, Victoria and Albert Museum, INV. 11-1872

'Thousands upon thousands' of examples of the *Arma Christi* have survived, suggesting that Western Christian uses of hieroglyphs, as discreet from 'Egyptian' usage, was widespread and well established when Colonna composed the *Hypnerotomachia.* What MacGregor reminds us is that the purpose of these images, although they served a mnemonic function, was primarily didactic and inspirational. They were 'a starting point for meditation',[266] an inward journey, a 'solitary, mental walk'.[267]

The inspirational or meditative aspect to symbolic imagery is further discussed with regard to Colonna and Camillo in Chapter Five, when I look at the revelatory quality inherent in their sign systems. The final part of this chapter, however, is devoted to their influence on emblematic work.

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[266] Finaldi, p.158.
[267] MacGregor, p.160.

Emblems

Both Camillo's *L'idea del Theatro* and Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia* rely absolutely on the use of signs, or hieroglyphs, in order to get their message across. While neither can really be termed an 'emblem book', as such, each had a significant effect on later emblematic work, such as editions of Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica* (Basel: 1567) and Bocchi's *Symbolicae quaestionum de universo genere quas serio ludebat libri quinque* (Bologna: 1555). It appears that Camillo's work was used, after his death, by a number of former students and associates passing it off as their own. Liruti, for example, suggested that Camillo's *Il Gran Theatro della Scienza,* was plagiarized by Allesandro Citolini in this fashion.[268] Wenneker has shown that sections of Citolini's work, *La Tipocosmia* (Venice: V. Valgrisi, 1561), are identical with passages from Camillo's *L'idea.*[269] There are parallels between both books in terms of their overall theme and it seems that Citolini primarily understood Camillo's work through the auspices of cosmology and science. The cosmological aspect of *L'idea* is further explored in Chapter Six. Significant as this may be, *La Tipocosmia* is not an emblem book. However another associate of Camillo's, Agostino Curione, was also involved in the plagiarism of his work, which led directly to elements of the text of *L'idea* being inserted into the compilation which became known as Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica.* The 1567 Basel edition of the *Hieroglyphica* includes two additional volumes by Celio Agostino Curione. According to Wenneker, the textual element in a number of the emblems in the additional volumes of the *Hieroglyphica* are directly attributable to Camillo.[270]

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[268] See Wenneker, p. 95, n.79.

[269] *Ibid.*, pp.403-405.

[270] Twenty-two of the emblems in the first volume are inspired by Camillo, and that at least five of the emblems in the second additional volume are by him, while another nine more use the same images as appear in Camillo although their interpretations are different. In the first commentary Wenneker finds identical or very similar passages in the emblems represented by *Prometheus, The Struggle of Reason and Appetite,* (equated with Saturn on the level of the Gorgons); *Argus, the Model or Framework of the World* (Argus beneath the door of the Sun on the level of the Cave); *Endymion or the Death of the Holy Men* (Endymion beneath Saturn on the level of Pasiphae); *Human Appetite* (The doors of Venus and Mars on the level of the Gorgons); *Mercury offering Diana a Garment,* and *Gorgons, or the Three Souls of Man.* In the second commentary, amongst others, Wenneker has found similarities in the description of Cerberus, and the images to represent the signs of Cancer and Capricorn.

The explicit plagiarism, or re-cycling, of Camillo's text, which occurs in the *Hieroglyphica,* instigates the production of original pictorial imagery to accompany it. As regards Bocchi's *Symbolicae quaestiones...*, on the other hand, I think there are explicit references both to Camillo, and to Colonna, as well as implicit influences. This results in images as well as text. Camillo himself is specifically named as the inspiration for Bocchi's Emblem LXXXVIII, in Book III; the image for this emblem is reproduced at the end of my work, as an Epitaph for Camillo.[271] There is, I think, another emblem (Emblem XLV, Book II) that uses Camillo's ideas as the stimulus for an image, even though his text is not explicity referred to; I will return to this emblem shortly. Bocchi's work also, however, explicitly re-uses imagery from Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia.*

Exactly the same hieroglyphic images reproduced earlier, for example, make an appearance in Bocchi's work as an emblem dedicated to the mysteries of Egyptian letters:

Symbolicae quaestiones...
Book V, Emblem CXLVII.

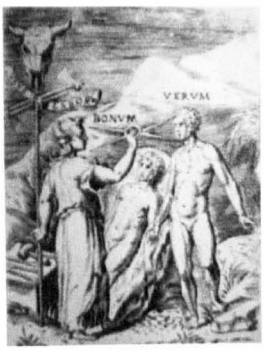
The hieroglyphs are slightly re-arranged in order to fit on the scroll held out by the angel in the picture, nevertheless, each element of the hieroglyphic scheme is faithfully represented, suggesting that the hieroglyphs are not regarded as decorative but as a systematic 'language'.

[271] P. 180.

These are not the only images from Colonna's work to be re-used by Bocchi. The very first emblem of the *Symbolicae quaestiones...* uses the image of an animal skull, which is the same as the first hieroglyph (top left corner) in the scroll held out by the angel above, finding its source in the *Hypnerotomachia.* Similar animal skulls appear in the *Hypnerotomachia* at other points in the book[272] as they do in Bocchi's work:

Symbolicae quaestiones...
Book 1, Emblem I

Symbolicae quaestiones...
Book II, Emblem XXXVI



Symbolicae quaestiones...
Book II, Emblem XLIX.

There are also similarities in images of processional triumphs:

Symbolicae quaestiones...
Book I, Emblem XXII

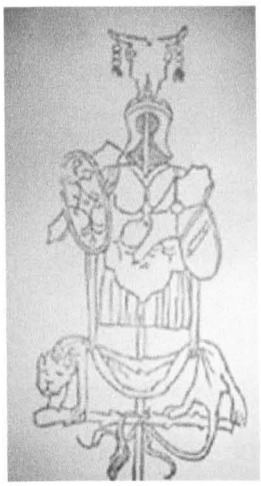
Symbolicae quaestiones...
Book IIII, Emblem CXV

Symbolicae quaestiones...
Book V, Emblem CXXXIII

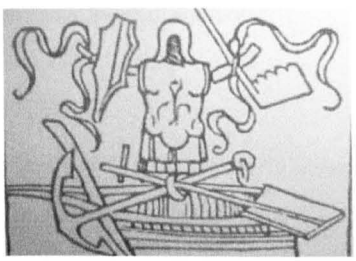
Each of these processional triumphs closely follow models of processional triumphs in the *Hypnerotomachia,* i.e. frontally positioned centurion's armour, with crossed spears, swords or shields creating strong diagonals below, above and/or behind the armour. There are other processional images in

[272] *Hypnerotomachia,* pp.69, 97, 260.

Bocchi's work, which, though similar, do not follow as closely to the pattern.[273] Colonna dedicates many pages to images of processional triumphs. Not all of these follow the pattern above, but three examples are included, here, which show armour, strong diagonals, and on one of them, the ubiquitous skull:



Hypnerotomachia, p. 328.



Hypnerotomachia, p. 267.

Hypnerotomachia, p. 327.

The artist credited with creating the woodcuts for Bocchi's work is Giulio Bonasone, from Bologna, though this is debated. [274] Correlations have been noted between Bonasone's themes and those of Camillo, not least in the emblem in the *Symbolicae quaestiones...* specifically devoted to Camillo.[275] However I think that there is another image in the *Symbolicae quaestiones...* which in form may be attributable to Camillo: this is an emblem of Pan:

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[273] E.g. Book II, Emblems XLII and XLIIII.

[274] Watson discusses the difficulties in identifying the artist of the Bocchi emblems; see Watson, Elisabeth See, *Achille Bocchi and the Emblem Book as Symbolic Form* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) p. 67. Watson regards the 'borrowed' hieroglyphic panel of Book V, Emblem CXLVII, as the only, or main, correlation between *Symbolicae quaestiones* and the *Hypnerotomachia.* She assesses its influence particularly with regard to the image of the ox skull, or *bucrania;* see Watson, p.102. For a biography of Bonasone, see Cirillo, Madeleine, B., 'Giulio Bonasone and Sixeenth Century Printmaking' (unpublished PhD. Thesis: University of Wisconsin, 1978). For an overview of Bonasone in relation to Italian printmaking of the period, see Bury, M, *The Print in Italy1550-1620* (London: British Museum Press, 2001).

[275] Wenneker, p.465; Bolzoni, *Gallery of Memory,* p. 124. Watson, p. 58. 'Although Bocchi dedicated Symbol LXXXVIII to Camillo, he did not refer to a memory theater [*sic*] or to an academy of architecture,' remarks Watson. This may be because Camillo neither created a 'memory theatre', nor was involved in an 'academy of architecture'.

Symbolicae quaestiones...
Book II, Emblem XLV.

Fauns and satyrs are plentiful in the *Hypnerotomachia.* They are portrayed as lascivious, predatory, triumphant. Often it is the satyrs that carry the great processional cars bearing the heroine and hero, Polia and Poliphilo. Yet the image of Pan by Bonasone, in the *Symbolicae quaestiones...* follows, I think, the pivotal image of Pan in Camillo's Theatre. Camillo says of Pan:

> ...his head symbolizes the supercelestial [world], with his horns of gold which point upward, and with his beard, the celestial influences, and with his starry hide, the celestial world, and with his goat legs, the inferior world.[276]

The significance of Camillo's image of Pan is discussed further in Chapter Six. Bonasone's Pan, striding through the countryside, pointing to his horns that pierce the sky, with his starry spangled hide, indicates that there was clearly a close personal and philosophical connection between these northern Italian writers and artists who saw the subversive potential of encoding a message within an image.

[276] *L'idea,* p.15.

Chapter Five:
Revealing Venus

'...the visual act always precedes
the act of loving...'

Dante, *Paradiso*[277]

Despite its complex storyline, there is, in the *Hypnerotomachia*, a great deal of humour. In fact, one cannot read it without suspecting that the entire thing is all an incredibly elaborate joke. Colonna writes much of the narrative with his tongue in his cheek as he describes his wanton, frolicking nymphs and almost permanently aroused Poliphilo. Even when the hero reaches the innermost sanctum of the great Goddess at the climax of the book, he is brought out of a wide-eyed reverie by rudely stubbing his 'erring' toe on the polished obsidian floor. This is not to belittle the book, or, paradoxically, to make it a less serious work. The innate jokiness of the *Hypnerotomachia* is important. Camillo, on the other hand, is not so prone to laughter. But this reflects the different approaches and textual forms of the two books. *L'idea* is designed to analyse space – it is a technical work. The *Hypnerotomachia,* at least on the surface, is a 'good yarn'. Nevertheless, there are strong resemblances in terms of their philosophy, their underlying chord.

Synonymous with the visual and sensual element of the *Hypnerotomachia*, is the belief, for Colonna, in the power of eroticism, or, rather, of seeing the world through the eyes of Eros. On one level, the book reads as a straight-forward dream of romance. But on another, it can be seen as an allegory of cosmic love, sacrifice and renewal dramatically played out in a world in which all that is represented is holy. Eroticism, or the interplay between seduction and temptation, giving and receiving, at the level meant by Colonna, anticipates the basis of the scientific theories of which Camillo was an advocate, in which every atom of the universe is sacred, awaiting the influx of the life-giving 'celestial streams' and 'spirit of Christ'.

[277] Canto XXIX, 139-140.

The motif of beautifully decorated curtains, or veils, is reiterated at key points in Colonna's narrative. The opening, or tearing, of the veils is a necessary prerequisite for Poliphilo's, and eventually Polia's, revelation of Venus, the Mother Goddess, in all her naked beauty, at the heart of the story. The idea of veils leads us back to Camillo who begins *L'idea del Theatro:*

> The oldest and wisest writers always have had the habit of protecting in their writings the secrets of God with dark veils, so that they are understood only by those, who (as Christ says) 'have ears to hear', that is, those who are chosen by God to understand His most holy mysteries.[278]

He continues by saying that Moses, after returning from the mountain and his encounter with God, 'could not be looked upon by the people, unless he covered his face with a veil'. And then, later: 'upon seeing Christ transfigured, that is, almost separated from the grossness of mankind', the Apostles were only able to comprehend Him through 'signs and visions'. For Camillo and Colonna signs, by definition, were riddles, sphinx-like and sacred, to be understood only by lifting aside the veils, which conceal them.

The Bull at Venus, 2001

In this chapter I will explore how the themes of eroticism and creation are expressed respectively in the *Hypnerotomachia* and *L'idea* in terms of revelatory images. It is difficult to talk about revelatory imagery without reference to memorial practice. Certain images, such as the *Arma Christi*

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[278] *L'idea*, p.7.

mentioned in Chapter Four, were seen as having inherent power. By reminding the viewer of the divine, they stimulated a divine response, a 'starting point for meditation', the contemplative beginning of an inward event. As I will discuss, the revelatory quality to some of Camillo and Colonna's visual imagery bypasses text. Their works *rely* on visual sense-experience for meaning. This is non-discursive; and is outwith, or deeper than, rationality. The use of images provides a kind of 'super-text' to the whole. There are differences to the ways that each author adopts the use of this super-text. At the most basic level, Colonna, for example, uses images like a construction manual, while at other times they are wholly enigmatic.[279] I think that Camillo, on the other hand, believed that it was under the aegis of the image that comprehension and understanding – that revelation itself - was possible.

Paduan Angels

In *The Book of Memory,* Mary Carruthers talks about the 'continuous understanding' of Dante's angels in his *Paradiso.*

> From the first moment these beings found their bliss
> within God's face in which all is revealed,
> they never turned their eyes away from It; 78
>
> hence, no new object interrupts their sight
> and hence, they have no need of memory
> since they do not possess divided thought... [280] 81

The face of God 'in which all is revealed', found in the Empyrean Heaven, is the consummate image for the angels. No beauty or wisdom can compare with it; it is their deepest desire. As the angels' contentment is complete, because their vision of god is immanent and immediate, they 'have no need of memory' because they are only aware of the present moment; the past (and

[279] E.g., the images on pages 215-223, which describe the workings of the religious ceremony officiated at by the High Priestess.
[280] Dante, trans, Mark Musa, *Paradise* (USA: Penguin Classics, 1986), 29: 76-82.

the future) is not relevant. While angels 'have no need of memory', Carruthers continues, humans, on the other hand, must 'know by remembering physically-formed phantasms'.[281] The idea of the *physical* impression of images on the memory is derived from Thomas Aquinas's interpretation of Aristotle. An image 'is not ghostly like that of a photographic slide projected on a screen, but is an actual physical imprint that permanently affects the brain tissue...The change in the eye occurs in the same manner in which phantasms are recorded in memory, like a seal in wax.'[282]

Paduan Angels in American Sky.

In this chapter I will look at a number of shared motifs that address the corresponding themes of eroticism and creation that I believe are essential to both the *Hypnerotomachia* and *L'idea*. I will focus on three that particularly embody the matter: these are the significance of flowers, a map, and the Theatre. There are a number of other similarities, but these ones in particular address the themes above. In a sense, however, the key similarity is that they both move seamlessly between reality and myth. For both authors, the possibility of revelation – the possibility of looking deeply into things to find a mythical dimension - is exposed in the everyday. The real, material world has as much valence as an imaginary, allegorical universe; while on the one hand, Camillo uses mythological motifs and symbols to describe material reality, on the other, Colonna uses the real world to embellish his myth.

Godwin has suggested that the 'Temple to Diana' (of which the character of Polia is a devotee) represented in Book Two of the *Hypnerotomachia* is a 'thinly disguised portrait' of a convent in the modern city of Treviso, and that Polia herself represents a real woman with whom Colonna was in love. Like the Monastery of Giovanni e Paolo in Venice with which Francesco Colonna

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[281] Carruthers, p.57.
[282] *Ibid.*, p.55.

was associated for most of his life, the convent associated with the austere church of San Nicolò, which still dominates the skyline of Treviso, is also Dominican. Should we presume, then, that the 'real woman' that Colonna was supposed to have loved was herself a Dominican nun at San Nicolò? Was their relationship, in fact, a *bona fide* love-affair? Or should we instead understand Colonna's 'Temple to Diana' as a purely allegorical symbol, even if it was based on a truly existing place? Is Polia really a fictional character? As allegory, she is all beauty and truth; as real woman, she is a red herring? From the outset, the veracity of the *Hypnerotomachia* in terms of the identity of the author, and the nature of the allegory that it contained, has provoked more questions than concrete answers.

Even if there will never be definitive solutions to questions of identity in the *Hypnerotomachia,* I still think that Colonna can help to unravel the maze of Camillo. They still share underlying similarities in terms of their factual experience, and their internal subjective projection, of the world. Both share and express an experience lived on the brink between reality and myth. I will look further at the subjectivity that is at the heart of the visual experience in the final Chapter. But perhaps their particular emphasis on the cross-over between truth and invention can be ascribed in part to the specific culture from which they came. Venice, with its maze of alleyways and waterways, canals and tunnels and bridges is a contradictory city. A cobbled path becomes moving water; a bridge is a meeting place; a vast colonnaded square turns into the turquoise Adriatic.

Venice, c.1500.

As we shall see, the similarities between the *Hypnerotomachia* and *L'idea* in terms of spatial orientation and cosmic arrangement are further pronounced as regards their shared central motif of a Theatre, and I will discuss this further at the end the chapter, but I would like to turn now to their shared focus on the significance of flowers.

In flowers, says Camillo, 'lies the secret of all the secrets that it is not permitted to reveal'.[283] He is talking about one of the most enigmatic of the symbols of the whole Theatre: the ark of the covenant.[284] The ark, says Camillo, 'signifies the three worlds', that is, the supercelestial and the celestial worlds, and 'this lower world', which is exposed to heat and cold and 'all the changes'. He places the ark on the level of The Cave, under the influence of Saturn, in other words he sees it as an 'elemental' symbol under the influence of mythical/Saturnine time. Camillo regards the ark itself as giving 'place' to all things that are contained in the three worlds, while the 'meanings' of the worlds have been assigned to Pan (who, as I discuss in the following Chapter is possibly representative of the Earth). That the ark is concerned with 'place', under Saturn, suggests that we should understand this not only in the sense of geographical location, but also in terms of temporal, or historical, position. The ark, as the container of the mysteries of the worlds, is located at Saturn, while the interpretation, or meaning, of the mysteries is revealed by Pan.

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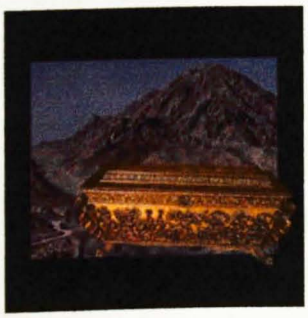
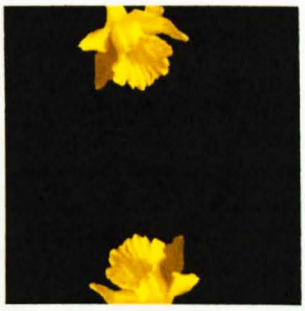
[283] *L'idea*, pp.47-48.

[284] In talking about this image, there is an immediacy about Camillo's prose that suggests that he is describing in detail a picture that he is seeing in his mind's eye – you get the impression that this image, in particular, must have existed as a tangible object.

In describing the celestial world as represented by the ark, Camillo says that it is, itself, symbolized by a 'candelabra of gold with seven lamps signifying the seven planets'. (Whether this candelabra and the following images are actually inside the ark itself is not clear.) A 'separate lamp with three arrows by its side' symbolizes the sun 'in its superiority'. There are 'some vases' which represent the reception that the planets experience from the 'supercelestial influxes'. 'Spherical figures' indicate the planetary spheres. And then we come at last to the flowers, which hold the deepest secrets and greatest mysteries. Their significance is such that even here, in *L'idea,* when he has finally agreed to reveal the secret of the Theatre to Muzio, after fifteen years of keeping silent, the mystery known only to the King of France, he is unwilling, or unable, to divulge the meaning of the flowers. Flowers are connected to time, to a representation of the spiritual essence of God manifested in tangible reality. Transient, rooted in the earth and dependent on the heavens, flowers are reminders of the macrocosm within the microcosmic. Perhaps they are also representative of the receptivity and openness that is required to receive the influx of the supercelestial.



Ark of the Covenant, 2001



Narcissus, 2001

For Colonna, flowers are everywhere. Flowers adorn the river banks, are worn by the nymphs, make garlands for the triumphal processions. Fields and meadows are filled with wild flowers; there are formal knot gardens, trellises and palisades of flowers. The scent of flowers fills the air. There is even a miracle of flowers at the Temple of the High Priestess.

Hypnerotomachia, p. 234.

Poliphilo is symbolically united with Polia at the temple of the High Priestess, in a ceremony that prefigures their vision of Venus. The ceremony begins with a sacrifice of two turtledoves and two white swans. The Priestess scatters the ashes of the swans onto a large urn in the centre of the temple, from which instantaneously appears a miraculous rose bush laden with red fruit. The Priestess picks three of the fruit, giving one each to Poliphilo and Polia to eat, and eating one herself. After eating the fruit of this miraculous rose, Polia reveals to Poliphilo that she has been a devotee of the same order as the High Priestess; however, with the High Priestess's blessing, Polia, metaphorically speaking, casts aside her veil, and instead devotes herself to Poliphilo. Their symbolical marriage, allows them their later vision of Venus; it is as a united pair, as man and woman joined, that they are granted their greatest revelation within the context of Poliphilo's dream, as a whole. This, as we shall see, occurs in the centre of the island of Cytherea.

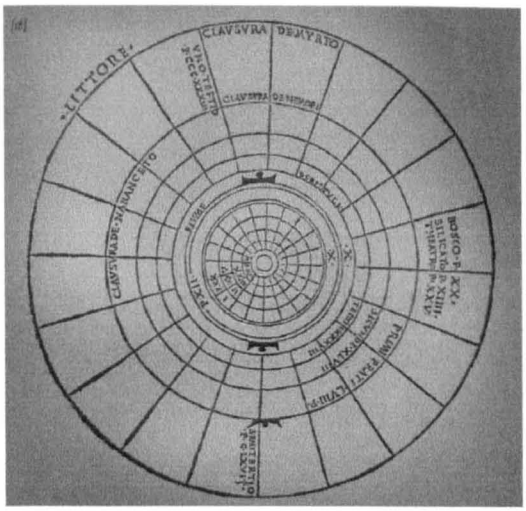
The Descent of the Soul, 2001

The Map

Poliphilo's journey is punctuated with descriptions of architecture and monuments, processions and pastoral scenes, nymphs, satyrs, centaurs, gods and goddesses all described in minute detail, in 'close-up'. The story itself almost reads like a continuous series of *tableaux vivants*. If Colonna had filmed his epic rather than written it, one senses that he would have used a macro lens for the entire work, focussing on skin, hair, leaves, flowers, as though they were only a breath away. Occasionally he draws back for a wider perspective, as when, for example, he describes the layout of the Island of Cytherea, and reminds us of the sense of progression in Poliphilo's journey, suggests that Poliphilo is actually *going* somewhere. But any sense of urgency to arrive at his goal is tempered with, and occasionally almost overwhelmed by, his sensuality, that revels in the experienced, the present moment.

Cytherea itself – a 'delightful and pleasant island'[285]- is the goal of Poliphilo's expedition. It is perfectly circular; a mile in diameter. The island itself is made up of a series of ever contracting circles of meadows, groves, and fields, all subdivided in a radiating pattern. A river, beside an ornate peristyle that encircles the island, is banked with narcissi, hyacinths, lilies, gladioli, marigolds, dandelions and violets. The outer circles contain cypress, myrtle and citrus trees. The mid section is made of formal circuits of fields, each divided into 'little square gardens'.[286] The interior part has knot gardens, gardens with emblems, mosaic pavement and marble paths; there are orange, myrtle and box hedges, stairs and colonnades. Colonna's map of the island is shown below:

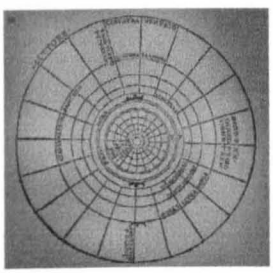
[285] *Hypnerotomachia*, p. 311. For the description of the island, see pp. 290-325.
[286] *Ibid.*, p. 318.



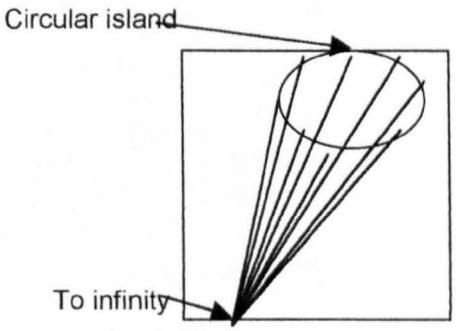
The Isle of Cytherea, p.311

The map of the island is the only perfectly circular motif in the book, and Colonna goes to pains to tell us how it is precisely subdivided into gardens and enclosures: 'The first garden was 33 paces, the second 27 and the third 23...the wood was 25 paces wide...'[287], and so on.

(Incidentally, Colonna's map of Cytherea, viewed not as a flat ground plan - not as spokes radiating from a wheel - but as an illusion of infinite depth literally takes on another dimension:



Map of Cytherea



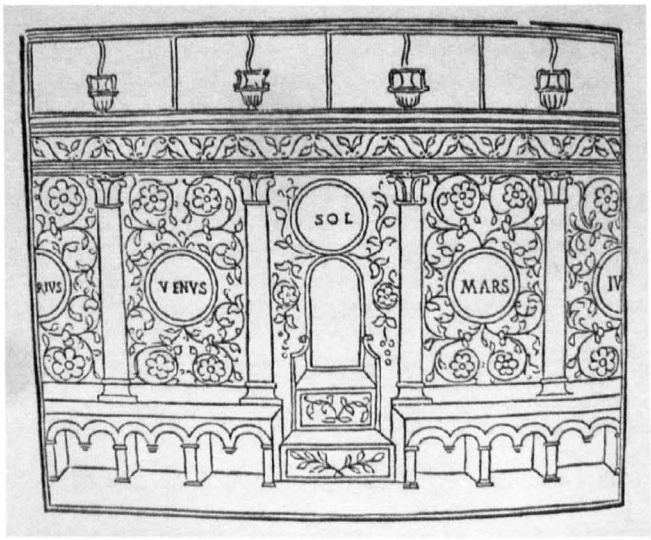
Poliphilo's journey, viewed in this way, is a journey inward. When he arrives at the very centre of the island, he has come, in a sense, to the vanishing point.)

I will return to the description of the island shortly, but I would like to make a little diversion, here, to describe an earlier architectural motif in the book. This is the palace of the Queen Eleuterylida (Free-will), from which, with the

[287] *Ibid.*, p.325.

Queen's blessing, Poliphilo had set out on his mission to find Polia near the beginning of the story.

After passing through a curtain held by the lady Mnemosyna (memory), Poliphilo had come to a 'spacious court...perfectly square'. Here, the walls were 'all covered with plates of pure, lustrous gold', and Poliphilo saw, 'with great pleasure [that] the seven planets with their innate qualities [were] perfectly represented'. There were also 'seven triumphs of the subjects ruled by the planets...the seven harmonies of the planets, and the transit of the soul receiving the qualities of the seven degrees'. All of the 'celestial operations'[288] were depicted with accuracy and skill. We are led to understand that the metaphysical is represented, here, with precision. The Queen's throne, itself, was located at the place of the planet Sol, 'raised above the others'[289] because of its importance.



Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, p.98.

Eleuterylida's palace is interesting in a number of ways. Firstly, it is significant that it is Mnemosyna, or memory, that should open the curtain to reveal the scene. Within the economy of the story, memory, here, is similar to a part of Camillo's conception of the three intellects of the interior man. Memory in this instance can be understood not only as a memory for facts, for tangible data –

[288] *Ibid.*, p.94.
[289] *Ibid.*, p.96.

for things outside oneself; but also, in the Thomist or Dante-esque sense as a deep, interior memory in reception of the 'divine ray'. This is not a Neoplatonic memory of universals already 'imprinted in the soul'.[290] Mnemosyna has *revealed* the vision to Poliphilo, her action of moving aside the veil has actively allowed him to move deeper into the palace, to witness the scene. She has revealed a picture of interior space. Allegorically speaking, the respective gender of the protagonists – of Mnemosyna and Poliphilo - is essential to the active and passive roles that they embody, as are all the gender roles in the book. The disclosure provided by memory allows the protagonist to enter an interior and metaphysical space in which he encounters the personification of free-will, which is positioned at, and emanates from, the place of Sol, associated with the Sun. This metaphysical space can be understood at the level of an interior personal space and at the level of an interior projection of cosmic space. It is microcosmic and macrocosmic.

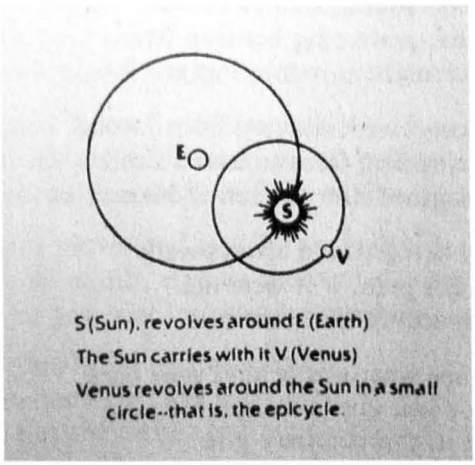
At the level of the interior personal space, then, Poliphilo, at the palace of Eleuterylida, has come to a place where he is given a vision of inner freedom. 'no treasure in the world could possibly compare with that which you truly find in me,' says Eleuterylida. 'neither the almighty Creator nor orderly Nature herself could have shown you a greater treasure than to reach my divine presence and ample munificence'. Free will itself, says Eleuterylida, is a 'celestial talent veiled from mortals,'[291] but she bestows on Poliphilo the opportunity to experience it fully. That this gift should be bestowed in her palace, surrounded by representations of the planets, suggests that this can be understood, at the level of projected cosmic space, in terms of planetary influence; that in a sense the power of Eleuterylida has freed Poliphilo from the effects of astrological determinism.

I have made this long diversion from the island of Cytherea to make the point that Poliphilo's journey can be understood in terms of a number of spatial levels: there is interior personal space and interior cosmic space. These are

[290] Carruthers, p.56.
[291] *Hypnerotomachia*, p.122.

the allegorical or 'deep' spaces of the book. There is also the level of the evident, explicit, linear story-line, which could be called the 'shallow' space of the book. It is the tendency of the book as a whole to flit between these shallow and deep spaces which I think is one of the reasons that the *Hypnerotomachia* seems humorous – the reader is never certain whether Colonna is in 'deep' or 'shallow' mode. Poliphilo chooses to follow the path suggested by Thelemia - will, desire - to arrive at his goal, Cytherea, the island of the Fountain of Venus.

As I will discuss further in Chapter Six, Ptolemaic astronomy was based on the idea that the planets turned on their own epicycle which itself moved around the sun. Mark Musa's planetary map shows this with regard to Dante's depiction of Venus:

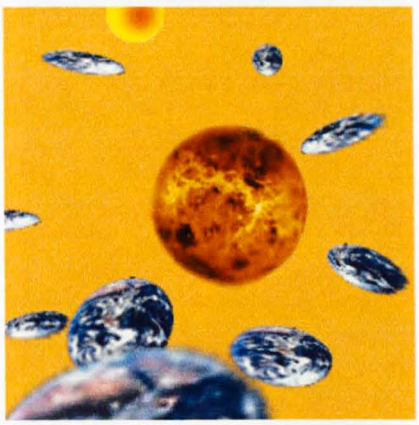


Paradiso, p.98.

The Sun moves around the stationary earth. Around the sun spins Venus, on its epicycle. Dante himself talks about the 'frenzied beams of love' that are 'rayed down'on man by Venus, saying the planet 'woos the sun at both its nape and brow',[292] referring to the spinning of the epicycle and as Musa says, 'the carnal love that Venus was thought to inspire'. [293] If we transpose this on to the map of Colonna, Cytherea itself becomes an embodiment of the planet, and Poliphilo and Polia's entrance a cosmic enactment of the union of free-will and love. This can be understood, as discussed above, at the allegorical level of the 'interior' man as a ritualistic and mimetic enactment, but it can also be

[292] Dante, *Paradiso,* Canto VIII, 3: 10-12.
[293] Musa, in *Paradise,* p.99.

recognized as a representation of cosmic space. Godwin points out that Colonna's work fits 'within a long tradition of 'cosmic' interiors, beginning before the book was written with the astrological decorations at the Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara, and culminating in the seven planetary rooms originally planned for the palace of Versailles'.[294] His work was to have a significant affect on later garden design, for example at the Villa d'Este, the Venus Grotto at the Boboli Gardens and the Sacred Wood of Bomarzo.[295] Echoes of the island garden of Cytherea can be seen in the Botanical Garden at the University of Padua, as I discuss below. There is no reason to suppose that the *Hypnerotomachia,* although written in the form of a romance, was not also interpreted in the light of a practical manual. Colonna's influence, then, in terms of Camillo, becomes one not only of emblematic or symbolic motifs, as discussed in the previous chapter, but also of the physical arrangement of landscape and space.



Venus at the Banquet, 2001

For Camillo, Venus is represented by 'a sphere with ten circles'. Like Colonna and the description of Cytherea, Camillo's sole emphasis on circularity appears here, at Venus. The tenth circle, he says, 'shall be golden and full of spirits', with a 'volume' that appertains to the 'Elysian Fields and the souls of

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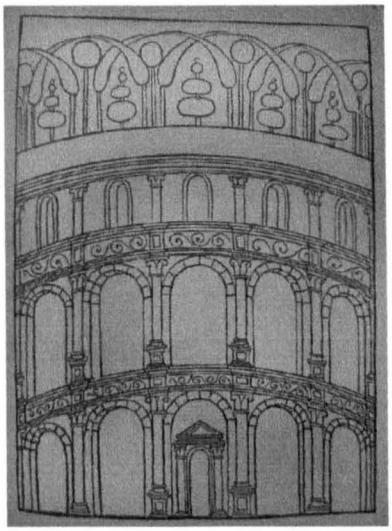
[294] *Hypnerotomachia*, p.xvi.
[295] *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

the blessed'.[296] He says that, here, also 'the earthly paradise' will be discussed. These subjects have been assigned to Venus 'because of the delight and charm of such places'. [297] The connection was synonymous for Camillo with the idea of circularity, an 'earthly paradise' or garden, and the planet of Venus. While it is likely that Camillo had been influenced by the paintings of Hieronymous Bosch - or at least the philosophy and science that lay behind them – the similarities between Colonna's motifs for Cytherea and Camillo's representations for Venus are conspicuous. And the similarities in terms of planetary arrangement and cosmic space do not end there. Their most striking correspondence is in the use of the motif of a Theatre to describe the most sacred – the most divine – sanctum of all.

The Theatre



Hypnerotomachia, p. 351.

A wood of rare trees surrounds the innermost part of Cytherea, reiterating the first wood from which Poliphilo had originally stumbled to begin his journey. This time, however, rather than a place of fear and confusion, the wood is a:

> ...blessed, happy, comfortable and leafy wood where streams of bright water [rush] through little channels and winding rivulets, and sacred

[296] Wenneker suggests that this may refer to a discussion in the *Epinomis* about the 'relative unimportance of geographic location...of the hereafter compared to the rewards to be found in it'. See Wenneker, p.373, n.26.

[297] *L'idea,* p.26. The description of Venus, here, is at the level of the Banquet. For a fuller explanation see Chapter 2.

> springs [run] with a soporific murmur...here, beneath the shade of the young leaves, there echoed many a lively conversation as countless noble nymphs sequestered themselves...[298]

The nymphs, elegantly got-up in 'thin silken crêpe' in a variety of pastoral colours from saffron, swan-white, yellow and yellow-green, interspersed with the occasional violet, 'sang to antique instruments and busied themselves...with rustic pursuits' while in the trees, 'strange and beautiful birds, never before known or seen by the human eye' were 'intent on their love-making, hastening with delightful chirping through the branches that were modestly clad with bright and never-falling leaves'. Beyond this sylvan scene, stairs lead to an 'impressive colonnaded enclosure [that] formed a wall around a spacious site, separate, unimpeded and flat...decorated with a marvelous creation of emblematic mosaic'.

> ...in the outmost triumph, the magnificent procession gradually approached an archway containing an open door conspicuous both for its material and for its workmanship, which led to a marvellous amphitheatre, built very high and filled with ornaments of art and artifice, the like of which was never seen...[299]

The Theatre on Cytherea is 'exquisitely made and perfectly finished'. It is surrounded with flowers: myrtle and roses spill from flower boxes; there is a latticework of trees – cypress, box and juniper. The 'zenith of architectural ostentation', more than human, rather it is 'divine'. If the whole of Poliphilo's journey has been through a symbolic land of allegory, now he has come to the centre, the ultimate place of transformation and change.

The magical entrance way - 'a stupendous work; built of oriental lapis-lazuli'[300] – leads to the interior, where 'at first sight [Poliphilo thinks he is] witnessing a most stupendous miracle.'[301] Here, a smooth expanse of black stone appears

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[298] *Hypnerotomachia*, pp.324-325.
[299] *Ibid.*, p.346. It is here that the image of the wolf, lion and dog, discussed in the previous chapter is displayed.
[300] *Ibid.*, p.347. Lapis Lazuli was thought to be the alchemical 'Philosopher's Stone'.
[301] *Ibid.*, p.352.

to be the deepest abyss as well as the cloud-filled sky. Poliphilo imagines that he is about to fall, only to be shocked into finding that he is looking at an illusion of the firmament.

> ... the entire pavement of the arena...seemed to consist of a single, solid obsidian stone of extreme blackness and indomitable hardness, so smooth and polished that at the first step I withdrew my right foot, fearing that I was about to fall into an abyss and perish in the midst of all my love and happiness. But its resistance soon brought my scared and shaken spirits to their senses, by hurting the erring foot. In this clear stone one could see the limpid profundity of the sky perfectly reflected as in a calm and placid sea, and likewise everything around or above it, much better reflected than in the shiniest mirror...

Colonna himself seems to be unsure how to describe the significance of the Theatre on the island of Cytherea. 'The astonishing Temple of Ephesus, the Roman Colosseum, the Theatre of Verona and all the rest must give way before this structure' he says. Is it a building designed for religion, for temporal power, for entertainment?

Theatre itself was going through a period of radical change at this time; how much Colonna was influenced by, or himself influenced, this transition is a moot point. It has been shown, for example, that Niccolò Perotti's *Cornucopiae*, which was published in 1489, may have had an effect on Colonna's work.[302] Perotti's *Cornucopiae* also uses the motif of a theatre. In Perotti's case it is an 'Amphiteatrum Caesaris'; he even has a temple to Venus. Perotti, like Colonna and Camillo, favours the use of emblematic material: the first thousand pages of *Cornucopiae* are made up of 'Epigrams' of varying lengths.[303] However even though there are obvious similarities, Perotti's emphasis in the *Cornucopiae* is more on temporal, rather than spiritual power.[304] His temple to Venus is an attribute of Caesar's

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[302] *Ibid.*, p. xiii.
[303] There are CXLVII Epigrams.
[304] The long discussion about the use of the Latin language, with copious references to Cicero, that forms a part of the book also makes me wonder whether this may have been one of the works that gave rise to Erasmus's charge of 'Ciceronianism'.

Amphitheatre, rather than the end and goal to which the whole of the book is aimed.

Yates has correlated Camillo's Theatre, on the other hand, with the theatrical designs of Sebastiano Serlio (1475-1554), whose influential *Libro d'Architettura* was published in Paris in 1545.[305] Serlio's designs for theatre were profoundly to affect the work of Palladio (1508-80) and his stage settings were to be copied for centuries. Parts of the *Architettura* sound as though they are describing Camillo's *L'idea.* In the Theatre, says Serlio, we are made to watch as:

> the horned and lucent moon rises slowly... In other scenes the sun rises, moves on its course, and at the end of the play is made to set.... With like skill gods are made to descend from the skies and planets to pass through the air. [306]

Serlio continues by discussing the place of the vanishing point in a theatrical setting in order to achieve the maximum appearance of pictorial depth, as I discuss further in Chapter Seven. But it is debatable whether Camillo was influenced by or rather, himself, had an influence upon the architect. Camillo lectured at Serlio's father's house when Serlio was still a child, and it thus seems more likely that Camillo's ideas may have influenced Serlio rather than the other way around.[307]

Perotti, Serlio and Colonna, as well as, of course, Camillo, each represent a different contemporary approach to the newly emerging *ideas* of Theatre. For Perotti, the Theatre is a symbol of political power. His Amphitheatre harks back to the antique days of the rule of Caesar, a time when Rome held sway in a military and economic sense and the Empire was great. Perotti's Theatre is first and foremost a literary metaphor – a concept – rather than an actual

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[305] Yates's version of Camillo's work is based on an adaptation of the Vitruvian theatre. See Yates, pp. pp.170-172. For Serlio and Camillo, see Bolzoni, *Gallery of Memory,* p.31.

[306] Serlio, Sebastiano, *The Second Book of Architecture (Il Primo (Secondo) Libro d'Architettura,* Paris, 1545, pp.63-74, trans., Allardyce Nicoll, in Hewitt, Barnard (ed.), *The Renaissance Stage, Documents of Serlio, Sabbattini and Furtenbach* (USA: University of Miami Press, 1958), p.24.

[307] The academician, Bernadino Partenio (ca 1500-1589), remembered hearing Camillo lecture at Serlio's house in Venice, when he was a boy. Partenio said of Camillo's discourse at Serlio's house, 'I believed that certainly no man, not even a god, could speak and know as much as he.' See Bolzoni, *Gallery of Memory,* p.31.

building. For Serlio, on the other hand, whose specific designs for Theatres and their internal settings deal in real space, it is a tangible, public building in which illusions can come alive; the Theatre is primarily a place of entertainment and distraction. Both Colonna and Camillo's Theatres deal in the divine and, to differing degrees and in different ways, the arrangement of cosmic space. Colonna marks out the Theatre as the locus of a kind of personal religious experience, a place of sensual and heavenly revelation. Giulio Camillo projects the idea of the Theatre onto the entire universe: the Theatre, for Camillo, is where man's full relationship to the divine, to the whole of the celestial world, is made known.

The concept of Theatre was as much a literary convention as a place of spectacle, as much about discovery as distraction. The world's first Anatomical Theatre was built at the University of Padua in 1594. Inside this elliptical arrangement students crammed in to watch the dissection of bodies exhumed in secret from the city's graveyard. Forbidden by the Church, staff and students alike ignored the ban in the hunger to look inside the drama of the body itself. In an upstairs room at Padua University, dedicated to Hieronymous Fabricius, the Professor of Anatomy who initiated the Theatre, a row of skulls is still kept - *memento mori* of the staff who donated their bodies for the new science.

Model of Anatomical Theatre, University of Padua

The design of the anatomical theatre at Padua was as much to do with prosaic necessity as aesthetics. The tiered arrangement allowed the students, who had to stand shoulder to shoulder throughout the dissections, to

physically support each other, in case of nausea or fainting. The fascination with the inner workings of the human body pre-dated the Anatomy Theatre itself by decades. Camillo talks about witnessing the controlled disintegration of a body in *On Imitation.* He says that he saw 'an excellent anatomist once, in Bologna, [who] enclosed a human body in a box full of holes'. The box was then 'exposed to the current of a river, which decomposed and destroyed within a few days all the flesh on the body, which then exposed of itself the wonderful secrets of nature, surviving alone in the bones and nerves.' [308] He equates the flesh and bones of the body with a 'model of eloquence', which he says is sustained by 'matter and design alone'.

The Anatomy Theatre at Padua shows that the design of theatres was by no means restricted to the use of a proscenium arch, or even that that the idea of Theatre was necessarily dependent on presenting an *illusion* of reality. The Theatre could equally be a place in which the outer layers of things could be stripped away to look at the truth of what lay beneath.

Orto Botanico, Padua.

The first Botanical Garden in the world was created in 1545 also at the University of Padua.[309] It is in a circular enclosure that radiates out from a central fountain in neatly divided parterres, reminiscent of Colonna's

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[308] See Appendix I.

[309] The Garden was planned by the Venetian, Daniele Barbaro, drawing on suggestions from the Medieval *Horti Conclusi* (Enclosed Gardens). The architect was Andea Moroni. The plants in the Garden itself may have been drawn from *The Carrara Herbal*, a fifteenth century manuscript written for Francesco II, Lord of Padua (r.1390-1404), by the Augustinian, Jacopo Filippo. A translation from Arabic, the *Herbal* is derived from the work of the physician Serapion the Younger (c. 800).

description of the island of Cytherea. It is home to some of the oldest rare plants in Europe.

Orto Botanico, Padua.

Here, for the first time, this garden of 'Simples', was adopted by a University. The study of herbal recipes for the cure of the body became a scientific drama in its own right. The plants themselves took centre stage.

Fountain, *Orto Botanico*, Padua.

Inside Colonna's Theatre the hero and heroine find the 'mysterious fountain of the divine Mother'.[310] Made from the same black stone that surrounds it, the

[310] *Hypnerotomachia*, p.358.

Fountain has a wall a foot high, 'heptagonal in its outward form and round within.' On the instructions of Cupid, Poliphilo tears aside a curtain brocaded with flowers, inscribed with the word 'Marriage', in the centre of the Fountain, revealing Venus. The Goddess is half submerged in water, her 'divine body ...luminous and transparent...blazing...in the rays of the sun.'[311]

The image of Venus waist high in water, in a sense, sums up Colonna's philosophy. The liminal place between appearance and manifestation, at the surface of things, is where meaning itself is exposed. And yet even though the Goddess – the goal and summation of the journey – is a vision of complete beauty and love, she is still just out of reach. She is revealed and concealed, reflected and refracted, by the water of the pool. She is both immanent and remote. It is only the blood-letting of Cupid's arrows that allows the final denouément. Fluid, in a constant state of metamorphosis, Poliphilo's journey involves continuous change, from one place to another, from one emotional state to another. The Theatre, finally, is where all Colonna's deep and shallow spaces converge.

Camillo's use of the Theatre as an overarching motif in which to draw a picture of his astronomical theories derives, in part, I think from a similar philosophy to Colonna. Poliphilo is unable to operate within the context of Colonna's world without being wholly affected by the visceral experience of outside stimuli. '...not a single capillary but was penetrated by the amorous flame' says Poliphilo in describing the piercing of his breast by Cupid's arrow, 'while I seemed to be changing my form accordingly.'[312] In the same way, Camillo describes an animate world in which the plants, rocks and flowers are alive, in sentient reception of heavenly influence. For Camillo, 'celestial streams' operate on the earth from the heavens. These streams, as we shall see in Chapter Six, move through the very capillaries of the skin, of every single hair of man.

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[311] *Ibid.*, p.362.
[312] *Ibid.*, p.366.

Chapter Six:

Divining Stars

'The very hairs of your head are all numbered'

Luke 12:7

Earning the epithet 'divine' was, I think, for Giulio Camillo, not a judgement of his personal qualities. It was simply because he looked at the stars.[313] Following in the footsteps of the Dominican scholar, Marsilio Ficino (1433-99), Camillo believed that the sun, which 'fosters and nourishes all things...is the universal generator and mover'.[314] Like Ficino, Camillo is usually perceived as a literary scholar and he has most often been judged in relation to those who deal in words. But Camillo's aim, the universal picture expressed in *L'idea*, is one that intimately combines the principles of natural philosophy, astronomy and number with mythology and language in a way that is markedly more systematic, or 'scientific', than Ficino. While the language that Camillo uses is based on art and mythology, his thinking is rooted in principles that bear direct correlation to other Renaissance astronomical theories of the day. There are useful comparisons to be made between Camillo's *L'idea* and astronomical treatises such as the celebrated *Sphera* of Sacro Bosco, Pontano's *De Rebus Coelestibus* and even aspects of Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus*. Understood in the light of his scientific contemporaries Camillo's connection to Giordano Bruno becomes clearer. This is an area of Camillo's work that has been passed over in recent scholarship,[315] while it is possible that for his contemporary detractors it was this very area - his science - that was misunderstood, to the detriment of his later reputation.

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[313] Yates uses the term pejoratively (*Art of Memory*, p.130). However see Copernicus, *De Revolutionibus*, Book One, in which the term is meant simply to define the heavenly from the human.

[314] *Liber de Sole*, in *Marsilii Ficini Florentini, ...Opera* (Basel: Henric Petrina, 1576), I, 966. Translation by Kuhn, in Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Copernican Revolution* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1957).

[315] Bolzoni focuses on Camillo's literary achievements; Wenneker on his contribution to emblem literature; Yates assesses him in terms of the art of memory. Hilary Gatti's work on Giordano Bruno does not address the possible influence of Camillo on Bruno's cosmology.

In this chapter I will explore the scientific milieu from which Camillo evolved, and make comparisons between his work and the ideas of his contemporaries. I will give particular emphasis to new explorations in astronomy at the University of Padua, where natural philosophers such as Achillini and Nifo were expounding anti-Ptolemaic theories during the early years of the sixteenth century. Padua was the university at which Camillo studied philosophy and jurisprudence, probably at about the same time as Copernicus was himself a student.[316] While I have no direct evidence that Camillo and Copernicus knew each other, it is significant that they both worked or studied at the Universities of Bologna (though at different times) and at Padua, a greenhouse for new astronomical ideas. Even if they were not personally acquainted, Camillo and Copernicus would have been aware of a common parlance. In the latter part of the essay I will explore literary parallels between aspects of Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus* and Camillo's *L'idea.*

I think it is important here to stress that while it is fruitful to assess Camillo in terms of astronomy – and that these were the very parameters within which he wished to be viewed (and before I can be accused under the trades' description act!) - Camillo was not a mathematical astronomer. He did not, like Copernicus, provide mathematical reasons or models to back up his theories. Even though Camillo valued a philosophy of number and measure he was not prone to abstract mathematics. [317] But he was not alone in this; it was common to value deductive reasoning over abstract mathematics as the preferred philosophical method of choice. In fact, as shall become apparent in the case of Copernicus's mentor, Wojciech of Brudzewo, abstract mathematics themselves were sometimes viewed if not with suspicion, then with a certain amount of scepticism as to their efficacy in ascertaining truth. As Jardine explains, it was only 'in one branch of astronomy, judicial astrology, which combined the predictions of mathematical astronomy with

[316] There are no precise dates for the period when Camillo studied at Padua, but it is reasonable to estimate that it would have been in the years around 1500. We can date Copernicus's time at Padua from 1501 –1503. (He took his doctorate at Ferrara in 1503) Copernicus was a student at Bologna from 1497 to around 1500. Camillo is believed to have held a Chair of Dialectics at Bologna from around 1521-25.

[317] See in particular *L'idea,* p. 24.

sublunary physics' in which the disciplines of mathematics and natural philosophy 'mingle freely'.[318]

In 1517 the Paduan philosopher, Agostino Nifo (1473?-1538) went so far as to dismiss Ptolemaic theories as *'fabulas aniles'* ('old wives tales')[319]; although Nifo was by no means the first seriously to criticise Ptolemy. The discovery, for the Europeans, of America by Columbus in 1492 had radically affected the mental map of the earthly world. By 1497, the Bolognan Professor (and tutor of Copernicus) Domenico da Novara, was propounding new theories for the heavenly one. Novara questioned Ptolemy's *Geography,* which for centuries had been for mapmakers a touchstone, as revered as Ptolemy's cosmological work, *The Almagest,* engendering a number of alternative theories in the ensuing decades. A contemporary account of these by the Jesuit astronomer and mathematician, Clavius (1538 – 1612), identified at least five different schools of cosmology in evidence in Italy alone as late as the seventeenth century.[320] Nevertheless despite the plethora of alternative cosmologies, the prevailing orthodoxy held by the majority to be correct at the turn of the sixteenth century was still generally Aristotelian and Ptolemaic.

Ptolemy's *Geography*

In order to place Camillo in his astronomical context, I will begin by looking at the Aristotelian Ptolemaism of Medieval Italy. This will necessarily be a very cursory picture of a large topic, yet I believe it will be helpful in order to understand Camillo's perspective. I will outline the basis of other contemporary cosmological theories in evidence in Italy, namely: the

[318] Jardine, Nicholas, 'The Significance of the Copernican Orbs' *Journal for the History of Astronomy* 12 (1981) p.176.
[319] Nifo, Agostino, *In quattuor libros de cello et mundo et Aritote. et Avero. expositio,* bk. 2, fols. 23-26, quoted in Lattis, p.90; Lattis, James M, *Between Copernicus and Galileo,* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994).
[320] See Lattis, *passim*.

homocentric and what Lattis has named the 'fluid heaven' theory and the 'celestial channel' theory. I will make specific comparisons between these hypotheses and aspects of Camillo's *L'idea*. I will also look at literary parallels between Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus* and Camillo's *L'idea*. And finally I will discuss the heliocentric theories that I believe are at the core of Camillo's hypothesis.

Endymion kissed by Diana, 2001

The cosmological picture inherited by Medieval Europe was derived from the teachings of the Greeks and the Egyptians, represented respectively by Aristotle and the astronomer and mathematician Ptolemy. Other influences came from Plato's *Timaeus*, Cicero's *Scipio's Dream*, from Pliny and the work of a number of other scholars and philosophers; the seminal influence of the translations of Arabic astronomy in Europe is outwith the scope of this chapter to discuss.[321] Following Aristotle the Mediaeval world-view placed the stationary earth at the centre of a series of spinning spheres that contained the elements and the planets. Closest to the element of the earth itself were the spheres that contained the other elements: water, air and fire, in that order. A fifth, superior, element called ether was the medium of the heavens. All of the elements were subject to change, apart from ether, which did not change but was in a state of endless movement. Cicero, in *De Natura Deorum*, describing the nature of ether (and quoted by Camillo in *L'idea)* says

[321] According to North, 'Almost all of the astronomy known to the Christian scholar of the early Middle Ages came from one of seven authors...[namely] Pliny (first century A.D.), Martianus Capella (fifth century), and Isidore of Seville (seventh century)... a translation and commentary by Chalcidius (fourth century) of Plato's *Timaeus*... another commentary (fifth century) by Macrobius on a work called *Scipio's Dream*, by Cicero;... Boethius (sixth century); and... Bede (eighth century). North, J.D. *Stars, Minds and Fate, essays in Ancient and Medieval Cosmology* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1989), p.402. For a précis of Arabic astronomy see, for example, Singer, Charles, *A Short History of Scientific Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 140-164.

it is a celestial fire, 'tenuous, transparent and suffused with a uniform heat'.[322] In the ether, were the spheres of the moon, the planets, the sun and the stars.

The interior of the dome of the Baptistery, Padua Cathedral, by the artist Giusto de'Menabuoi

Representations of cosmology ranged from simple linear diagrams in manuscripts or printed form to major works of art woven into the fabric of social and religious life. The interior of the dome of the Baptistery at the Cathedral of Padua, for example, painted by the Florentine artist, Giusto de' Menabuoi, at the end of the fourteenth century, incorporates an example of a Christian Aristotelian cosmological map.[323] The Earth is surrounded by concentric circles of colour. These represent the spheres that contained the elements that were thought, in accordance with Aristotle, to encircle the Earth, and the other planets. The outermost circle is surrounded by the signs of the

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[322] Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, 37, quoted by Camillo in *L'idea*, p.40.

[323] The Baptistry itself dates from 1075. Menabuoi had completed most of the work on the interior by 1378. Previously, Menabuoi had worked for ten years with Giotto on the interior of the Scrovegni Chapel, and a clear relationship can be seen between the two in terms of shared pictorial conventions – Menabuoi's angels around the scene of the Crucifixion, for example, appear out of the sky around the head of Christ ringing their hands and weeping, or with their hands outstretched to the crowd of people below the Cross in a gesture of sorrow and surrender, in a way that is markedly similar to the angels that surround the mourners beside Giotto's body of Christ in the Scrovegni. Nevertheless, for all their pictorial similarities, the emphasis for each painter is different. Giotto's emotional force is, I think, matched by Menabuoi's metaphysics.

zodiac, beside which, in a blaze of gold sits Christ with a bevy of angels. Above the head of Christ (not shown) is a perfectly symmetrical heaven crowded with saints, angels, God, Mary, and doctors of the church.

Bosch *The Garden of Earthly Delights,* outer panel

Heavenly depictions were not confined to Italian painters. Completed approximately a hundred years after Menabuoi's depiction at Padua, Hieronymous Bosch's translucent orbs in *The Garden of Earthly Delights* are probably a close visual equivalent to what was imagined by the term 'heavenly sphere', itself.[324] Bosch's '3D rendering' shows how complex and delicate the visualization of the spheres could be, as well as illustrating that the spheres themselves, like Russian dolls, could fit inside each other. The most basic maps simply show a series of concentric linear circles, with a layer of 'fixed stars' at the outermost rim. The concept of a sphere was often ambiguous, and the boundary of each of the spheres was not clearly defined. Theories about the number of the spheres varied. But the most frequent model, shown for example in the popular astronomical treatise of John of Sacro Bosco (written during the thirteenth century and used up till the seventeenth) showed the earth surrounded by the spheres of the elements, extending through the spheres of the moon to the planets and the sun, to the sphere of fixed stars The outermost sphere described by Dante in his astronomical work, *Il Convivio,* was called the *primum mobile;* this was

[324] Prado, painted around 1505 – 1510. The illustration shows the outer panel of the triptych which opens out to reveal the Garden within. Transparent, or semi-transparent, orbs of varying sizes form a recurrent visual motif in the inner painting. One prominent sphere, for example, in the middle panel, shows a man and woman inside, both of whom are faced with another glowing orange sphere that might be the inside of the flower, or it could be a sun.

thought to revolve at immense speed, instigating the movement of the spheres below it.[325] Outwith the *primum mobile* was the unmovable Empyrean Heaven.

Diagram of the Universe, from Peter Apian's *Cosmographia* (1539)[326]

The movement of the spheres and of the planets was thought to be in perfect circles. However according to Ptolemy the pivotal point of the spinning of the planets and the sun was on its own 'deferent' orbit.[327] This 'off-centreedness' was to account for the perceived precession and recession of the planets in their yearly orbits around the earth. It was perceived that the planets tended to look at times as though they were moving backwards, and that sometimes their light was dimmer than at others, so it was assumed that their motion must in some way be irregular. Ptolemy's solution had for centuries seemed to solve the problem, and his extensive tables of star data and planetary predictions were on the whole accurate enough to satisfy debate. In the *Almagest,* written in around 150 AD, Ptolemy had described the three basic mechanisms of the movements in his planetary system as the 'eccentric circle', the 'epicycle', and the 'equant'. It is not necessary here to go into detail

[325] Dante describes the movement in *Il Convivio* (The Banquet, c. 1304-1307) as being instigated by Intelligences, or angels ('substances separate from matter'). The tenth immovable sphere, according to Dante, 'announces the unity and stability of God.' This Empyrean Heaven is, he says, 'immovable, because it has within itself, in every part, that which its matter demands.' This is the reason that the *primum mobile* moves with such immense velocity: '...because [of] the fervent longing of all its parts to be united with those of this most quiet heaven...'. Dante, *The Banquet,* trans. Katherine Hillard (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1889), pp.65-69.

[326] In Koyré, Alexander, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe,* (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957), p. 7.

[327] The deferent was the imagined circular orbit of each of the planets and the sun around the earth.

regarding this system other than to understand that this was the basis of the cosmology inherited by Renaissance scholars. [328]

Medieval Ptolemaism was substantiated by a vast literature based on the principle of the Spheres. The *Theorica planetarum* for example was a popular thirteenth century textbook on Ptolemaic astronomy going through at least eight editions in northern Italy between 1472 to 1531. Georg Peurbach's (1423-61) influential *Theoricae novae planetarum* reinforced the Ptolemaic view, as did John of Sacrobosco's *Sphaera* mentioned earlier, a popular book which itself provoked a number of commentaries, even a short text from Galileo. Containing four chapters, and only twenty four pages long in modern translation, Sacrobosco's *Sphaera* 'presents the fundamental cosmological tenets of ancient and medieval European astronomy: the sphericity of the heavens and the Earth, the basically circular motions of the heavens, the centrality and immobility of the earth, and the negligible size of the earth with respect to the heavens'.[329] The final chapter deals cursorily with the motion of the planets. The *Spera mundi,* a compilation of cosmological and geographical writings, published at Venice in 1478, includes Sacro Bosco's *Sphaera* as well as the theories of the twelfth century astronomer Gerardus Cremonensis (1114?-1187). The *Spera mundi* - an almanac of philosophical musings, lists of the attributes of geographical regions and planetary data - represents the characteristic qualities of the type of cosmological treatise with which Camillo would presumably have been acquainted.

The *Theorica,* the *Sphaera* and the *Spera mundi* were all fundamentally Ptolemaic in that they proposed the earth to be at the centre of the universe, with the sun and other planets revolving around a centre close to that of the earth itself. But by the early years of the sixteenth century a number of alternative theories were in circulation. Three of these were the homocentric theory, and what Lattis has called the 'fluid heaven' theory and the 'celestial

[328] See, for example, Lattis, pp.55-60, for specific details, including an explanation of 'parallax' – a geometrical application to determine celestial distance.
[329] *Ibid.*, p.41.

channel' theory.[330] Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus* was not published until 1543 – although whether heliocentric theories were debated in learned circles before this time is a moot point. Aspects of Camillo's *L'idea* bears close comparison to the 'fluid heaven' and 'celestial channel' theories; I will also put the case for it being heliocentric. The theory with which he has least in common is the homocentric, however I would like to begin by outlining the homocentric approach as it appears to have been particularly strong at the University of Padua where Camillo and Copernicus were students.

As mentioned earlier the Paduan philosopher Agostino Nifo, had dismissed Ptolemaic theories in 1517 as old wives tales, while Alessandro Achillini (1463-1512), criticized Ptolemy in his *De Orbibus.* Nifo and Achillini have become associated with the 'homocentric' movement of astronomy, that evolved at Padua in the early fifteen hundreds. The election, in 1499, of the Averroist, Pietro Pompanozzi as Professor of philosophy (with whom both Nifo and Achillini took issue) guaranteed that the place would be a hotbed of debate and it was certainly an institution that favoured a new approach not only to the arrangement of philosophical, but also material, space.[331] Homocentrism, was not confined only to Padua, however, but had adherents throughout the country.

The homocentric astronomers believed that the earth was at the exact centre of the universe, around whose axis the rest of the cosmos span in concentric circles as opposed to the Ptolemaic system based on the so-called 'eccentric' and 'epicyclic' circles. The homocentric cosmology was as much based on a Renaissance desire for order and proportion, a belief that 'off-centredness' just didn't make sense in a harmoniously balanced natural universe, as on

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[330] Philosophical aspects of the 'fluid heaven' and the 'celestial channel' theories overlap, however. There is much in common, for example, with Pietro d' Abano's philosophy (whom Lattis cites in the 'fluid heaven' camp) and a 'celestial channel' hypothesis. Clavius, the sixteenth century mathematician of whom Lattis has made a study and upon whose instigation he has defined each of the cosmologies above, held a chair at the new Jesuit Collegio Romano. As a contemporary 'round up' of cosmology it is a rich source.

[331] For the relationship of Nifo and Achilini to Pompanozzi, see Levi, *Renaissance and Reformation,* pp. 164-166.

systematic mathematics.[332] However it seems that there was some debate as to exactly how many concentric spheres there were and the order in which the planets themselves were arranged.[333] The critique of contemporary astronomy, written in 1581, by Clavius, gives the homocentric cosmology as much credence as to the Copernican theory – that is: not much - suggesting that at the time homocentric astronomers were at least as prominent as the Copernicans.

Notable amongst the Paduan homocentrists were Amico and Della Torre.[334] Giovanni Battista Amico (1511?-36) published *De motibus corporum coelestium iuxta principia peripatetica sine eccentrics et epicyclis* at Venice, in 1536. Abandoning the concept of eccentrics and epicycles he suggested that instead the poles of the spheres had oscillatory movement. Girolamo Fracastoro (1483-1553), though not himself from Padua, makes explicit his debt to the Paduan School in the dedication of his *Homocentrica* published at Venice in 1538.[335] Fracastoro's thesis was based on 'the principle that the axis of each [celestial] sphere should be perpendicular to the axes of the spheres immediately above and below it'.[336] Following certain members of the Peripatetic school, whom he does not name, he supposed there to be six orbs above the firmament.[337] In Fracastoro's dedicatory letter to Pope Paul III he states that he was inspired by Giovanni Battista Della Torre – an astronomer from Padua who himself never published any work – implying that there may have been some kind of kudos in attaching oneself to the Paduan school and also, as Lattis says, that '...the general interest at Padua in homocentric

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[332] Copernicus's teacher, Domenico da Novara, for example, ' held that no system so cumbersome and inaccurate as the Ptolemaic had become could possibly be true of nature', Kuhn, p.69.

[333] In his critique of contemporary astronomy, Clavius complained that some of the homocentrists proposed up to seventy-nine spheres, for example. See Lattis, p.94

[334] Lattis also cites the fourteenth century astronomers, Roger Bacon, Henry of Langenstein, Bernard of Verdun and Jean Buridan as being involved in the homocentric debate.None of these were from the University of Padua, so I have not mentioned them in the body of the text. Nevertheless their appearance indicates how widespread homocentrism was at this period, contributing to an intellectual culture that disputed the validity of Ptolemaism.

[335] He was a Veronese physician.

[336] Lattis, p.90.

[337] As Lattis points out, Fracastoro is unspecific about which particular Peripatetics it is to whom he is referring. It is interesting though to note the reference as Camillo mentions the Peripatetics (sometimes disparagingly) on several occasions in *L'idea.*

astronomy would seem to have been more extensive than the published sources alone attest'.[338]

Despite Camillo's close association with Padua, I do not think in fact that his cosmology bears much resemblance to the homocentrists'. Firstly, while Camillo has an affinity with the conception of the unity and perfection of circularity, the motions that he ascribes to the planets are not themselves necessarily circular. Nor for that matter are they concentric or uniform. Camillo has two theories of planetary movement; one is based on the spiral; one based on unpredictability. I will discuss these further, at a later stage. Another reason to dissociate Camillo from the homocentrists is his dismissal of some of the theories of the Peripatetics, of whom at least Fracastoro is an advocate.[339] Secondly Camillo's *Idea* is perceived from the standpoint of the 'inner man' projecting his subjective earthly self onto the object of the heavens. This is necessarily done from the earth's perspective, but does not mean that the earth is itself at the centre.

But perhaps the greatest reason to dissociate Camilllo from the homocentrists is because Camillo's world picture is organic rather than uniform. He has more in common with the 'fluid heaven' theorists such as Robertus Anglicus (fl. 1260-80), Andalo di Negro (ca. 1270-1340), the philosopher Pietro d'Abano (ca. 1310)[340] and Giovanni Pontano (1426-1503). Generically speaking, their hypothesis was that the planetary spheres were autonomous incandescent bodies that floated through the heavens 'like birds in the air, or fish in the sea'. The heavens themselves were filled with 'concentric zones of a fluid medium' creating 'a single vast fluid heaven.'[341] The idea of a fluid through which the planets glide can be traced to the Stoics, and Cicero's *De natura deorum* and was revived by Camillo's hero Petrarch. The Stoics said that heaven was filled with *pneuma,* an animate fluid substance. Certainly

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[338] *Ibid.*, p.90.
[339] See *L'idea* p.25. Camillo takes issue with the Peripatetics for 'disavowing the Ideas, and saying the universals proceed subsequently, not before'. Copernicus also dismisses certain of the Peripatetics in *De Revolutionibus* Book One, Chap. Three, regarding their theory of the amount of water in the earth.
[340] This is the date that Lattis supplies for Albano. The books of Albano that I have studied were published in the early fifteenth century at Mantua and Venice.
[341] Lattis, p.94.

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[340] This is the date that Lattis supplies for Albano. The books of Albano that I have studied were published in the early fifteenth century at Mantua and Venice.
[341] Lattis, p.94.

Camillo makes much of the idea of moisture in the heavens and he implies that the area between ourselves and the planets is fluid rather than airy.[342]

Camillo does not go so far as his contemporary fluid heaven astronomer, Pontano, however, who advocated in *De rebus coelestibus* (*Opera,* vol. 3 (Venice 1519)) a theory that the planets' movement was based on their own free will. Pontano's 'ornate astrotheology' [343] explicitly rejected a mathematical model to explain planetary movement. Focussing on the astrological aspects of cosmology, instead he aims to bring a sense of order to his narrative through arranging his material in topics under such headings as 'Fortitude', 'Liberality', 'Beneficence', 'Splendour', 'Obedience' and *'Conviventia'*.[344] The concept of the topics, as discussed in Chapter Four, certainly has echoes in the work of Camillo, who talks at length, in his *Trattato dell'Imitazione,* about the concept of the *topoi* particularly with regard to his plans for the Theatre; *L'idea del Theatro* itself is fundamentally based on a topical, or encyclopaedic, approach to the organisation of felt experience and accrued knowledge. I would like to make another comparison, here, with the work exemplified by the *Sphère Austrasienne* (Paris, 1530) of Nicolas Volcyr, which though not specifically astronomical in nature, exemplifies the 'topical' approach.[345] Volcyr's *Sphère* illustrates the spiritual, familial and temporal wealth of the Duke of Lorraine, arranged according to a 'topical' schematization. Starting with 'The Genealogy of the kings and dukes of Austrasie' (beginning at Adam), the 'Sphère Austrasienne' develops through a number of 'topical' levels enumerating the wealth of the region to include even a section that deals with: 'Herons, market-towns, goats, cats'. Volcyr met Camillo in Paris in 1530, and the *Sphère,* I think, makes a link between a proto-emblematic, topical, work and the kind of planetary arrangement that Camillo was to later to develop.

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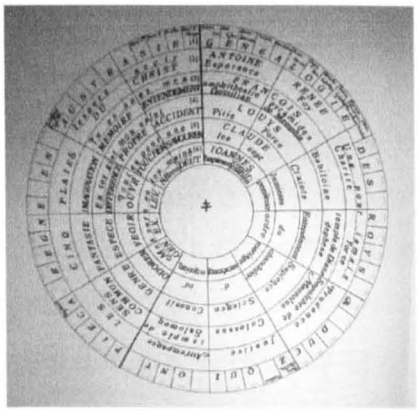
[342] See Chapter Two.
[343] Jardine, p.171.
[344] Pontano, Giovanni Giovano, *Opera,* (Venice: 1512).
[345] Camillo met Volcyr in Paris in 1530. See Choné, Paulette, *Emblèmes et Pensée Symboliques en Lorraine (1525 – 1633)*, (Paris: Klincksieck, 1991), pp.89-94.



Nicolas Volcyr's *Sphère Austrasienne*

More than Pontano, however, Camillo is close in spirit and thinking to the philosopher Pietro d'Abano. Doctor Abano, whose natural home is in the art of medecine, describes an animate world in which there is no division between the world of matter and the heavens. The material substance of the stars is as much a part of our bodies as our bones, affecting the very structure of our lives. There is an intimate, symbiotic connection between material and heavenly substance at an atomic level. In order to understand the stars, we need only to look at the workings of the body. Just as the currents of the blood flow through the arteries, so the stars move around the skies. He discusses the fluids of reproduction, of sperm, and menstrual flow affected by lunar phases, and projects the principle of regeneration onto the heavenly ether. Just as man and woman generate life, so the heavens reciprocate in a correspondent manifestation of time and being.[346]

For Abano, as spirit and matter are correspondent and interchangeable, so are astrology and astronomy. In his *Tractatus de venenis,* published at Mantua in 1473, he correlates astrology with medicine, providing a source of short treatises (or spells) that combine medicinal remedies with astrology and philosophy.[347] His *Conciliator differentiarum philosophorum et precipue*

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[346] 'Femella est mas orbatus. Quare in sermonibus geneasticis legis Mosaice scribitur. Adam ex eua ipsius semper binos marem & femelas ui delicet suscipere ut inuicem colomborum more possent genus propagare humanum. Causatur & similitudo ab ente particularioru amplius triplici puta celesti aliquo uigore in mensa imaginatione femelle maxime ac ifor matiua virtute indita femini...' Abano, Pietro d', *Conciliator differentiarum philosophorum et precipue medicorum Petri de Abano* (Mantua: Thomas Septemcastrensis & Johannes Burster de Capidona, 1472).

[347] Abano, Pietro d', *Tractatus de venenis* (Mantua: T. Septemcastrensis & Johannes Burster, 1473).

medicorum Petri de Abano (Mantua, 1472, and Venice, 1476) is an impressive work in which he more fully expounds his philosophy. His quoted sources to which he regularly makes reference include Biblical scripture, Ptolemy, Boethius, Trismegistus, and others, many of which are familiar to Camillo. Like Camillo's *L'idea* Abano's *Conciliator*...is a cosmic creation story which aims to link all knowledge in a synthesis of understanding (though whether this is all completely comprehensible is another matter!). He connects angelic beings to each of the planets in a strategic alignment of divine forces and heavenly spheres, reminiscent of Camillo's anthropomorphism of the planets on the first level of the Theatre.[348] The often repeated theme to the whole is the idea of the fusion of 'generation and corruption'[349], a concept derived from Aristotle (*De Generatione et Corruptione).* This idea is important for Camillo also, though Camillo prefers Trismegistus's concept of 'manifestation' and 'concealment' to describe what he believes are the immortal processes of life and death. 'Birth,' says Camillo quoting Trismegistus, 'is not a beginning of life, but only a beginning of consciousness; and the change to another state is not death but oblivion.' [350]

Bosch *Garden of Earthly Delghts*, detail

Another contemporary theory was that the heavens were filled with 'celestial channels'. According to Lattis, the planets were thought to move back and forth within these channels at random. Clavius describes it allegorically as the same as the system of veins within a body: '...the whole heaven will be filled

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[348] *L'idea,* p.14.

[349] 'Corruptio enim unius est generatio alterius & contra de ge. & cor. primo licet enim natura particularis generatione se per & conservationem intendat.' Abano, Pietro d', *Conciliator differentiarum* ...(No page numbers).

[350] *L'idea,* p.18.

with channels in proportion to the multitude of stars, just like [the bodies of] animals, which are filled with many and various veins'.[351] It was also later described, disparagingly, by the Jesuit Nicola Partenio Giannettasio as a theory that propounded the idea that the planets 'run back and forth like rabbits' using 'celestial channels as tunnels'.[352] The adherents of this hypothesis were seemingly few in number and Clavius does not mention any by name, nevertheless the fact that both he and Giannettasio, as late as 1688, discuss their work suggests that it was a significant strain of contemporary thought. Lattis, following Clavius, does not cite any contemporary astronomers to back up the theory, and nowhere is Camillo mentioned in his book. However, in *L'idea,* Camillo specifically talks about the concept of 'supercelestial channels'.[353] The idea of a system of veins circulating through the heavens, or the heavens as a planetary map of correspondences in the human body has many parallels with Camillo's work and it is tantalising to think that he may have discussed this idea even more fully in his early lost work, *Il gran theatro delle scienze,* in which the original plan for the 'Theatre' was based on a schematisation of the human body. However the idea of 'celestial channels', or 'celestial streams' forms a significant part of Camillo's hypothesis in *L'idea del Theatro,* as discussed below.

Girl with her hair raised to the heavens, 2001

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[351] Clavius, *Sphaera* (1611), p.48, quoted in Lattis, p.104.

[352] Giannettasio, Nicola Partenio, *Universalis cosmographiae elementata* (1688), quoted in Lattis, p.103.

[353] *L'idea,* p.41.

In the Theatre, 'Beneath the Cave of Mars,' Camillo describes four images: 'Vulcan, a Young Girl whose hair is raised toward the Heavens, two snakes who are fighting, and Mars on a Dragon'.[354] 'The Cave' is the third level of the Theatre, in which 'according to the nature of its planet...[are kept] the compounds and elements pertaining to it'. It will become important in the discussion of the 'celestial streams' to understand the function of 'The Cave' and certain other terms so I will spend a little time here to explain their significance. Camillo envisages seven Caves, one for each planet. The Cave connotes 'mixed' elements, while the previous level, the Banquet, stands for 'simple' elements. Thus, for example, Neptune beneath the Banquet stands for 'the element of simplest water', while under the Cave it stands for a compound of, or 'mixed', water.[355] The idea of a 'mixed' or compound element means the form which an element will take as it appears in the world, 'because in this world we do not see each element so pure that it is not mixed'. Thus 'mixed' water may be sweet or salty, standing or flowing. It can mean the rivers of the world, or the oceans, or it can be as small as the drops, the rock-pools and the puddles.[356] The 'simple' and the 'mixed' elements are themselves both formed from 'primary matter', represented on the very first plane of the Theatre, in which Camillo places the planets. 'Primary matter' is to be understood as the primal substance from which all else came.[357] Another important element to bear in mind is that Camillo perceived there to be not one but three worlds: the Supercelestial, the Celestial and the Inferior, just as he also imagined that man has three souls.

To return now to the 'celestial streams' and the images at the Cave of Mars, Camillo explains each of the four images at length. In essence: Vulcan is symbolic of fire; the two snakes fighting of 'discord, dissension and the

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[354] *Ibid*, p.40.
[355] *Ibid*, p.31.
[356] A derivation of Camillo's work can be seen in Allesandro Citolini's *La Tipocosmia* in which eight pages are devoted to encyclopaedic lists of the world's rivers. See Wenneker, pp.98-100, for a discussion of Citolini's plagiarism of Camillo in which she links Johannes Sturm to Citolini as a possible conduit for Camillo's work.
[357] Initially, there were two productions of God: one from 'within the essence of [God's] divinity, which has no beginning and is 'consubstantial, or coessential and eternal'. The other production, which exists 'in time', was made by God but outwith Himself: ' This was the primary matter, otherwise called Chaos, and by the Platonists, the world soul, and by the poets, Proteus.' *L'idea*, p. 17.

difference of things'; and Mars on a Dragon for God punishing the world, or 'things naturally noxious and poisonous'.[358] The Young Girl with hair raised toward the Heavens is meant to symbolise 'a vigorous thing either strong or trustworthy'. He explains that the image is based on Plato's idea of man being a tree upside down 'since the tree has its roots below and man has his above'.[359] He goes on, citing Origen and Jerome, to explain that the hair should be understood metaphorically as representing a part of the soul, just as the 'beard, eyes, and other parts corresponding to the body' should be interpreted, Biblically speaking, as correspondent to an aspect of what he calls the 'interior man'. In this way, just as 'the tree draws to itself through its roots the nutritive moisture from the earth, so the beard and hair of our interior man should draw dew, that is, the living moisture from the influxes of the celestial channels, from whence comes all its strength.'

Camillo is envisaging a vital equivalence between the body present in time and space and the eternal, between every particle of the body and the cosmos. This is operated through a correspondence on a sensual level with the 'inner man'. In the hair and beard and eyes, there is a tangible, personal, corporeal contact with the cosmic strength imparted through the 'celestial channels'. Bodily parts are connected to heavenly attributes. Elsewhere he says that just '...as the stars are the eyes of this world, so the plants and trees...[are] the skin and hair of its body and the metals and rocks are in the same way its bones...'.[360] And later, he says 'the world lives'. Vegetative matter, minerals, rocks, the cosmos and mankind all are in a state of constant reception of the celestial streams, the 'water of wholesome wisdom', reiterating his constant motif of an animate world in which every element is sentient of, and responsive to, its source.[361]

Camillo distinguishes between the 'supercelestial streams which do not wet' and the 'waters of this world, which do wet'.[362] The 'supercelestial streams'

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[358] *Ibid*, p. 42.
[359] *Ibid*, p.41 and *Timaeus* 90 A.
[360] *L'idea*, p.38.
[361] Ecclesiastes 15:3, quoted in *L'idea*, p.22.
[362] *L'idea, p.* 29.

are from 'the waters above the Heavens'.[363] Elsewhere he discusses the 'moist heat'[364] of heaven, saying that it is 'liquid, fluid, agile, slippery and pleasing and sweet to the touch of nature'.[365] The waters above the firmament are a macrocosmic version of the earthly element of water that is manifested in streams, rivers and oceans. The 'supercelestial stream', though it characterizes similar qualities to water in its form, movement, density and 'germinative powers'[366], is dissimilar only in its essential quality of 'wetness'.

For Camillo the spiritual or mystical aspect of creation is inseparable from the physical. Correspondent with the heavenly waters above the firmament, the celestial streams inseminate earthly matter not only with life but also with the 'spirit of life'.[367] The 'streams', 'channels', and elsewhere what he calls the 'dew', of heaven is the vehicle by which this seminal heavenly influence is imparted.[368] He quotes from Canticles (Song of Solomon)[369]:

> ...Thy head is like Carmel: and the hairs of thy head as the purple of the king bound in the channels...
>
> Canticles 7:5

and makes a reference to Psalm 132(133):

> Behold how good it is, and how pleasant, where brethren dwell at one! It is as when the precious ointment upon the head runs down over the beard, the beard of Aaron, till it runs down the collar of his robe,

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[363] Psalm 148: 4, quoted in *L'idea, p.* 29. The idea of the waters above the heavens is derived from Genesis 1:7.
[364] *L'idea,* p. 22.
[365] *Ibid.,* p. 23.
[366] *Ibid.,* p. 30.
[367] *Ibid.,* p. 38.
[368] The idea of a mystical 'dew' was common parlance in alchemical treatises, and it is appropriate here to mention the probable influence on Camillo of Paracelsus (otherwise known as Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (1493-1541)), whose alchemical works were widespread.
[369] In the King James version, the translation of the relevant verse loses the reference to 'channels'. Song of Solomon 7:5 *Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries*

It is a dew like that of Hermon, which comes down upon the mountains of Sion;

For there the Lord has pronounced his blessing, life forever.

Psalm 132(133)[370]

The 'channels', the 'ointment' and the 'dew' all represent for Camillo the celestial streams. Elsewhere he quotes from Luke: '...The very hairs of your head shall be numbered...' conveying the idea that the connections to the celestial streams of creation are apparent everywhere and in everything. [371]

To sum up: *L'idea del Theatro* has direct parallels with aspects of the 'fluid heaven' theory advocated by Giovanni Pontano, Pietro d'Abano and others. It corresponds with the 'fluid heavens' theorists specifically in terms of a 'topical' approach; the idea of a perpetual cycle of generation and corruption – or, in Camillo's terms – manifestation and concealment; and the concept of an organic, animate universe. Camillo was himself an advocate of what was contemporaneously called by the astronomer and mathematician, Clavius, the 'celestial channels' theory. According to Camillo, 'celestial channels', or 'streams', of the 'waters of wholesome wisdom' pour life into the earth. And while Camillo's work does not much resemble the homocentrists', such as Amico and Della Torre, it is significant that he was associated with the University of Padua where anti-Ptolemaic views abounded at the turn of the fifteenth century.

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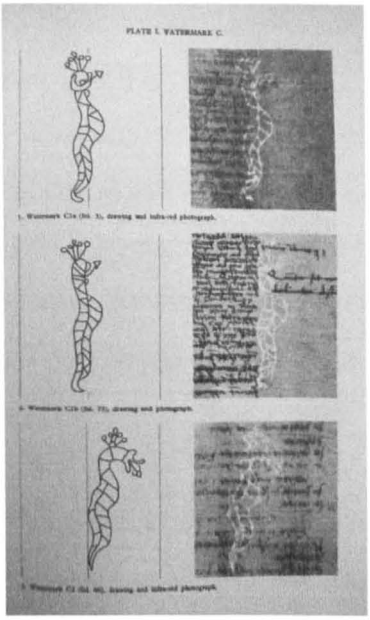
[370] King James Version Psalm 133: *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*
It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;
As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

[371] *Luke12:7*, quoted in *L'idea*, *p.*24.



Facsimile pages of *De Revolutionibus* showing a Hippocampus watermark on the paper[372]

I would now like to look at aspects of Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* first published in Nuremberg, 1543, and compare it with the work of Camillo. As I mentioned earlier, Camillo is not a mathematical astronomer, and I will not attempt a comparison at this level (although it is tempting to believe that it could be done: Camillo meant the work to be understood on the level of a 'literary/visual equation', as opposed to a mathematical one). Nevertheless, as I discuss in the final part of the chapter, I do think that Camillo's theory of the cosmos is heliocentric and it may be that a literary comparison of the two authors will be fruitful. Nicholas Jardine has said that: 'Taken absolutely at face value, Book 1 of [Copernicus's] *De Revolutionibus* appears as an attempt to provide a natural philosophical justification for the world-system which underlies the mathematical astronomy of the subsequent books.'[373] Camillo's writing, at face value, also operates on the level of 'natural philosophical justification'. Books 2 to 6 of Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus* provide a mathematical account of the universe from which, in a sense, Camillo appears to be distant. However the terms of 'natural

[372] There are four sources of paper in *De Revolutionibus,* from papermills throughout Europe. The pages above, with the Hippocampus watermark, are thought to be the oldest (c.1520-1525) coming from either southern France, Spain or Italy or possibly Holland. See 'Nicholas Copernicus Complete Works I', *The Manuscript of Nicholas Copernicus' 'On the Revolutions' Facsimile* (Warsaw: Macmillan and Polish Scientific Publishers, 1972).
[373] Jardine, p.168.

philosophy', as can be seen not only in Camillo's work but also in many of the other astronomical treatises of the period, e.g. the work of Abano and Pontano, were the terms in which theoretical hypotheses were couched; it was Copernicus's mathematics which were unusual. Copernicus's dedicatory letter to Pope Paul III and other aspects of *De Revolutionibus* famously make reference to the Pythagoreans, Cicero and even Hermes Trismegistus, all of whom are very much a part of Camillo's pantheon, suggesting that they held an intellectual field in common.

The convoluted history of the publication of Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus* is worth re-telling, as it explains some of the dedicatory letters and preface to the work itself. It is uncertain at what point Copernicus began to write *De Revolutionibus;* however the earliest observations in the book were made while he studied in Italy in around 1497 with the Bolognan Professor of Astronomy, Domenico Maria da Novara.[374] Copernicus's international reputation as an astronomer was established early, and he had given public lectures on astronomy in Rome in 1500.[375] For a number of years, after his return to Poland in 1505, colleagues and friends such as Tiedemann Giese, a fellow canon at Frauenberg, and Nicolaus Schönberg, Cardinal of Capua, had urged Copernicus to publish his theories, but he was ever reluctant. This reticence has provoked speculation. Was he afraid, uncertain, embarrassed; or was there another reason for his hesitation?

De Revolutionibus was finally published in 1543. It was not Copernicus but his disciple Rheticus who administered the publication of the work. An apocryphal tale has it that Copernicus was given a copy on his deathbed. Rheticus himself, however, did not see the task of publication through to the very end, and, famously, an anonymous announcement was inserted into the beginning

[374] Most of the astronomical observations of the book, however, were made at Frauenberg, where Copernicus settled in 1512.

[375] Later, in 1514, he was invited to return to Italy by Bernhard Sculteti, Chaplain to the Pope to take part in the deliberations on calendar reform, though Copernicus refused the invitation on the grounds that calendar reform was impossible until the problem of the motions of the Sun and Moon had been resolved. He was not only known as an astronomer, however. When in Poland, as a Canon at Frauenberg, he had other duties which required of him further skills. In 1522, for example, he presented a treatise on economic reform to the Prussian Diet advocating monetary union between neighbouring states.

of the book and published as though it was Copernicus's own words. The inserted passage stated that the calculations in *De Revolutionibus* were there 'not ...in any way with the aim of persuading anyone that they are valid...' and urges the reader not to 'depart from this discipline [i.e., astronomy] more foolish than he came to it.' Most intriguingly, from the point of view of a comparison with Camillo, is that Osiander states that the hypothesis of the sun being at the centre of the universe was no longer novel, in fact that it had been 'widely reported'.[376] The implication was that heliocentric ideas were common knowledge.

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If, as Osiander implies, theories of heliocentrism, explicit in Copernicus's work, were already widespread, then it makes little sense to imagine that Copernicus's reluctance to publish the work was based on fear of censure. Copernicus himself begins *De Revolutionibus* with a dedicatory letter to Pope Paul III, in which he says:

> I can well appreciate...that as soon as certain people realise that in these books...I attribute certain motions to the globe of the Earth, they will at once clamour for me to be hooted off the stage with such an opinion...[377]

But clearly Copernicus, having spent the greater part of his life devoted to its calculations, *did* have faith in his hypothesis. There may have been a delicacy to his constitution that shied away from the embarrassment that public scrutiny would afford him. But, like Camillo and *L'idea del Theatro*, Copernicus only came to agree to the dissemination of his theory in the very months before he died. Embarrassment, with death looming, hardly seems to be reason to hide your life's work.

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[376] The beginning of Osiander's *To the Reader on the Hypotheses in this Work* reads: 'I have no doubt that certain learned men, now that the novelty of the hypotheses in this work has been widely reported – for it establishes that the Earth moves, and indeed that the sun is motionless in the middle of the universe – are extremely shocked, and think that the scholarly disciplines, rightly established once and for all, should not be upset...' *De Revolutionibus*, p.22.

[377] *Ibid*, p.23.

There are other clues in the dedicatory letter to the Pope that signify to Copernicus's motifs regarding what he calls this 'divine rather than human'[378] science. He explains that he set himself the task of 'reading again the books of all the philosophers' to find out whether anyone had ever believed in the motions of the Earth. He mentions first Cicero, and then quotes from Plutarch, citing the Pythagoreans: Philolaos and Ecphantus, and Heraclides. He says:

> I hesitated for a long time whether to bring my treatise...into the light of day, or whether it would not be better to follow the example of the Pythagoreans and certain others, who used to pass on the mysteries of their philosophy merely to their relatives and friends, not in writing but by personal contact...[379]

There are parallels, here, with the preamble to Camillo's *L'idea,* discussed in Chapter Five, and the belief that 'the oldest and wisest writers' protected 'the secrets of God', revealing them only to those who 'have ears to hear'. [380]

It may be that Copernicus included his prelude to the Pope merely to sweeten the pill of his hypothesis. But I do not think we can dismiss Copernicus's letter as a purely rhetorical device. Copernicus's makes copious reference to the 'philosophers' in other parts of *De Revolutionibus.*[381] He is not alluding to them here glibly. If, as Jardine suggests, we take the piece at face value, it appears that both Copernicus and Camillo shared the same belief. Both men thought that the deepest mysteries were sacred and should not be profaned by common use. Copernicus says that truths should only be imparted by word of mouth. This relates to a belief in the potent power of the word to affect transformative change, to the authority of *Ars Oratoria.* Camillo himself did not write down his hypothesis but instead dictated *L'idea* to Girolamo Muzio. Copernicus and Camillo's hesitation at propounding their theories in public, in print, was rooted in a profound inhibition.

There is another similarity between the two in their projection of the human, or animal, onto the universe. Both men, for example, use the analogy of birth to

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[378] *Ibid.*, Book One.
[379] *Ibid.*
[380] *L'idea,* p.7.
[381] Eg, the letter from Lysis to Hipparchus.

ascribe motion to the earth. Copernicus says that the 'Earth conceives from the Sun, and is made pregnant with annual offspring'. [382] Camillo meanwhile, quoting Trismegistus, says that the earth 'is the nurse of all things...who conceives and gives birth...'.[383] In dismissing certain astronomical theorists, Copernicus says:

> They are just like someone including in a picture hands, feet, head, and other limbs from different places, well painted indeed, but not modelled from the same body, and not in the least matching each other, so that a monster would be produced from them rather than a man.[384]

The *Tabular Catalogue of the Constellations and Stars* at the end of Book Two of *De Revolutionibus* uses the language of bodily parts to describe star positions. This is due, in origin, to Ptolemy's naming of the constellations; nevertheless the intimacy with which the projected map of the heavenly bodies is described suggests a visceral response. 'On the right armpit', says Copernicus describing the position of a star in the constellation of *Hercules;* 'At the tip of the right foot'. 'On the beak' of *Cygnus,* or 'In the crook of the left wing'. 'On the shoulderblades' of *Andromeda,* or 'In the gaping mouth' of *Pegasus.* The list goes on for thirty-two pages in the same vein. The fascination for Camillo of the idea of the heavenly correspondence between the planets and our bodies is documented above.

Though they both ascribe motion to the earth, however, their similarity ends there as the *way* in which the earth moves, for each man, is different. Copernicus explains 'triple motion' i.e. the revolution that creates night and day; the annual revolution around the sun; westwards motion.[385] Camillo, on the other hand, is much less specific. It is unclear from Camillo's hypothesis

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[382] *De Revolutionibus,* Book One, Chap. X.
[383] *L'idea,* p.38. Wenneker cites the relevant passage in *Corpus Hermeticum* 1:235.
[384] *De Revolutionibus, p.*25.
[385] *Ibid,* Book One, Chap. XI.

whether the movement that he describes is of the earth or the sun, as he ascribes the simile of giving birth to both.[386] Nevertheless, the fact of:

The
earth
being
movable

is printed , in the manner above, in the margin of page 38 of the Venice (1545) edition of *L'idea del Theatro.* There are a number of marginal annotations in the book that sum up the important points in the text, as well as astrological symbols to mark the relevant passages regarding the planets. It is unclear whether these were added by the printer, or by Muzio, or whether Camillo instructed them. But whatever their source, these annotations provide a précis of the most salient parts of Camillo's thesis. It is tempting to think that Camillo may well have developed these key themes orally; that the annotations provide clues to topics that Camillo would have unpacked fully in front of an audience. But in any case, while he is not explicit here about the manner of its movement, his belief in the motion of the earth at least places Camillo at odds with the prevailing Ptolemaic orthodoxy, not to mention the Paduan homocentrist theorists most of whom state explicitly their belief in the stability of the planet.

Camillo's theory of celestial motion is closely allied to his conception of the 'spirit of Christ'. He says the 'spirit of Christ' moves over and through the world, being the source of generation, that this spirit is the binding principle of different elements:

> ...the truth of...the birth of things, is that primary matter, being in every part...things of a different nature such as water and earth...finding themselves together...would never be able to join together in a union, unless the spirit of Christ intervened, and entering into them, reconciled them to unfold the hidden seed...'[387]

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[386] He ascribes the simile of giving birth to the earth in *L'idea* p.38, and to the heat from the sun at p.20 equating the movement of birth to both.
[387] *Ibid.*, p.20.

The movement of the 'spirit of Christ', which seems to originate in the region of the sun, reads like the description of a birth and a nuclear reaction:

> ...the spirit...in everything, but hidden...gasping, gives birth...in the womb of nature, and thus joins it with motion. Thereafter joined by the eternal company with great love, it blows outside, impelling itself below to the dimension...[It spreads] in a kind of circle....And however much more it spreads, just so much more does it fuse and nearly send away with a new origin an almost continuous spirit spiralling from it...

Elsewhere, he reiterates the idea of planetary convulsions moved by love. Rather than a 'spiralling' or circular movement, as described above, however, Camillo here suggests unpredictable motion when he says that the earth is 'shaken by many movements' because it is 'an impossible thing to give birth without movement.'[388] It is difficult, here, to ascertain whether Camillo is referring to terrestrial movements such as earth tremors, or quakes and landslides, or whether he is envisaging random movement on a planetary scale. In either case, his opinion about planetary movement places him closer to the 'fluid heaven' theorists, than to Copernicus in this instance. Copernicus discusses the irregularity of planetary movement evident in the precession and recession of the other planets to the earth, but his solution to this is based on uniform circular orbits.

Copernicus illustrates his theory that the earth revolves around the sun, in a yearly orbit, in a diagram in Book One of *De Revolutionibus.* The diagram itself is similar in form to contemporary Aristotelian Ptolemaic pictures, with of course the crucial difference that the sun rather than the earth is at the centre. In a passage in which he quotes Trismegistus, Copernicus says:

> In the middle of all is the seat of the Sun. For who in this most beautiful of temples would put this lamp in any other or better place than the one from which it can illuminate everything at the same time? Aptly indeed

[388] Ibid., p.38.

> is he named by some the lantern of the universe, by others the mind, by others the ruler.[389]

In *L'idea del Theatro,* Camillo says that the sun has 'the most noble place of all the theatre'.[390] The sun is in the fourth place in the second level of the Theatre, that is, at the level of the Banquet. The Banquet is the place where the very 'productions [of] God' originate. 'In this place,' says Camillo, 'ordinarily devoted to the Banquet, Apollo shall be placed...[and]...the sun itself shall be discussed'.[391]

Camillo describes the first level of the Theatre, where the planets are positioned, beginning with the prevailing Ptolemaic order, that is: the Moon; Mercury; and Venus. At the fourth place, however, where the Sun would normally have been represented, he places four distinct images. These are: the 'Breadth of Being'; the Fates; a tree and Pan. Camillo says that the 'Breadth' or 'Magnitude of Being' is represented by the shape of a pyramid, which symbolizes the 'Divinity, unrelated and in relationship';[392] the appearance of the Fates symbolise cause and effect; the tree, or golden bough stands both for 'intelligible things' as well as 'those we can only imagine...enlightened by the Active Intellect'. Pan represents the three levels of the world. Camillo says that in the representation of Pan:

> '....his head symbolizes the supercelestial [world], with his horns of gold which point upward, and with his beard, the celestial influences,

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[389] *De Revolutionibus.*
[390] *L'idea* p.14.
[391] *Ibid.*, p.26.

[392] Yates says of this crucial element of the arrangement of Camillo's *L'idea* that: 'To bring out the importance of Sol, he varies the arrangement...by representing the Sun on the first grade by the image of a pyramid...' (Yates, p.138). Camillo does not say this. Camillo's description of the Pyramid is quoted above. (Elsewhere she says, correctly, that it represents the Trinity (Yates, p.151)). Camillo calls the Sun, the 'Sun'. He does not discuss the idea of what Yates terms 'Sol', other than in his description of the Pythagorean system (see Appendix IV), which he describes in Latin, rather his preferred vernacular. He also calls the Moon, the 'Moon', rather than 'Diana', as Yates suggests. These anomalies are reflected in Yates's plan of the Theatre.

and with his starry hide, the celestial world, and with his goat legs, the inferior world.'[393]

Camillo then treats of the remaining planets in the usual Ptolemaic order, i.e. Mars, Jupiter and Saturn.

Pyramid: Breadth of Being

Fates: Cause and Effect

The Golden Bough: Intelligible Things

The images of Pan, the Golden Bough, the Fates and the Pyramid are placed in the position where, in the Ptolemaic order, it would have been usual to place the sun. But, as mentioned above, the sun is relocated to the level of the Banquet – the single planetary sphere to be so positioned. The Earth, on the other hand, is neither explicitly named nor placed by Camillo. Is this omission accidental? He goes to great lengths to explain that due to the magnificence and power of the sun it has been given its own noble location, and discusses the elemental, mythic and angelic attributes of each one of the other six planets. It seems unlikely that he would have forgotten to mention the Earth, in this context. As he states in the opening pages of *L'idea*, the very planets themselves are the original starting point for the whole Theatre, each of them resting on one of Solomon's Seven Pillars of Wisdom. The position of the Earth, however, never explicitly discussed in *L'idea*, is left to be inferred. Though the Earth is not mentioned, could it be that we are to understand its glyph in the four images named above: Pan, the Golden Bough, the Fates and the Pyramid? Each one of these images powerfully connects the mundane and spiritual, the planetary and heavenly.[394]

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[393] *L'idea* p.15

[394] The Golden Bough signifies imagination enlightened by God; the Fates: cause and effect; the Pyramid: the Holy Trinity. Pan is half man, half animal. In Pan, I think, Camillo means us to recognize both Man and the Earth.

It is significant that four images are represented at this point. The number four, according to mediaeval geometry, was associated with stability and, geometrically speaking, the four-cornered square was meant to represent the earth. The figure of Pan described by Camillo unites the three levels of the world: the supercelestial, the celestial and the inferior. With his goat legs resting on the inferior world, the body of Pan reaches up and connects all the other levels. This is a cosmically proportioned representation of Camillo's 'inner man', working at the level of the stars, yet positioned on the earth. It is significant that Pan himself should be described in terms of four elements: his head and golden horns symbolizing the supercelestial world, his beard, the celestial influences, or 'streams', his starry hide, the celestial world, and his goat legs, the inferior world.

It is also interesting that the Fates should be positioned here. The Fates, according to Camillo, signify 'cause and effect'. At the beginning of *L'idea* Camillo states that the Theatre is the place where first causes leading to their consequent effects will be discovered. From an astrological point of view, the earth, and more precisely man on the earth, is where the influence of the other planets will be experienced, the earth is the epicentre of astrological determinism. However in Camillo's model, causes and effects *stem from* the earth, rather than the other way around. The relationship of the earth to the other planets is active rather than passive. Is Camillo, then, suggesting that his new planetary model bypasses astrological influence? Is he saying that, in his model, the earth itself, or man on the earth, has autonomous power over cause and effect? The relationships within the Theatre in terms of planetary influence are based on the assumption that particular planets have certain innate characteristics that can change aspects of existence, e.g. Saturn and the Moon have effects on time, Mercury has influence in communication. Yet as Camillo has switched the traditional positions of the sun and the earth, and, what is more, suggested that first causes come from the earth itself, the affect of the other planets is no longer controlling. Instead, all of the planets are part of an equal, changing, transformative organism. I think that this aspect of Camillo's Theatre was at least as radical as suggesting that the sun was at

the centre of the universe. As late as the seventeenth century, judicial astrology, for example, was still seriously considered, and yet Camillo was suggesting a new model based on autonomous self-sufficiency.

On a broad level, there are correspondences in terms of some of Copernicus's and Camillo's influences, the Pythagoreans and Trismegistus, for example. However there are also conspicuous divergences. There is a flavour of Cabbala, for instance, in *L'idea del Theatro*, that is not apparent in *De Revolutionibus*. *L'idea* is couched in mystical terminology, in visual image and metaphor. This is not to say that the material, scientific conclusions to which Camillo is drawn in terms of planetary arrangement and movement, should be underestimated. Camillo utilizes contemporary philosophical tools: his conclusions evolve from a working combination of mystical philosophy and contemporary theories of astronomy. As stated earlier, it was not unusual for natural philosophers to disregard the efficacy of mathematical method. Nicolas Jardine mentions Wojciech of Brudzewo, in this regard. Wojciech is thought to have been Copernicus's mentor in astronomy.[395] Jardine in discussing Wojciech's 'agnosticism' about the existence of (Ptolemaic) eccentric and epicyclic partial orbs, says that Wojciech:

> ...explicitly divorces natural philosophy from mathematical astronomy, assigning to natural philosophy the task of studying the real complete orbs, their nature, order and motions, and to mathematical astronomy the task of saving the phenomena by postulating imaginary mobile eccentrics and epicycles....[396]

In Jardine's assessment, then, real phenomena belong in the realm of natural philosophy, while the imaginary, or hypothetical, belong to the area of mathematics. For Camillo, a natural philosopher rather than a mathematician, to address astronomy was not in itself unusual. What *was* extraordinary was that he attempted to do this by tackling the issue – in a literal sense – spatially. The *idea* for Camillo's 'Theatre', attempts to locate in a tangible

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[395] He taught from 1474 until his death in 1495 at the University of Cracow. See Jardine, pp. 168-194.
[396] *Ibid.*, p. 171.

space (and in 'real time', to use a current visual art term) the heavenly and terrestrial relationships.

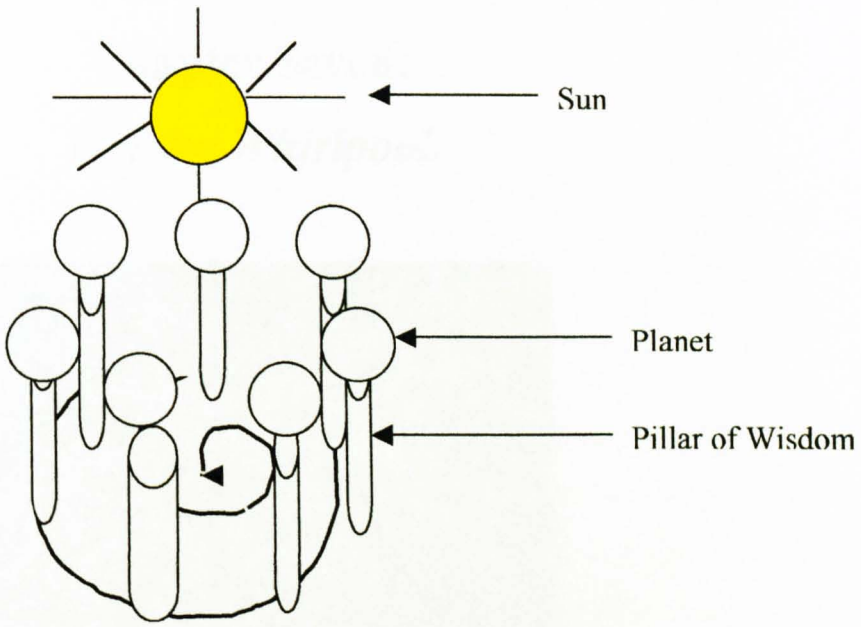


Figure 1

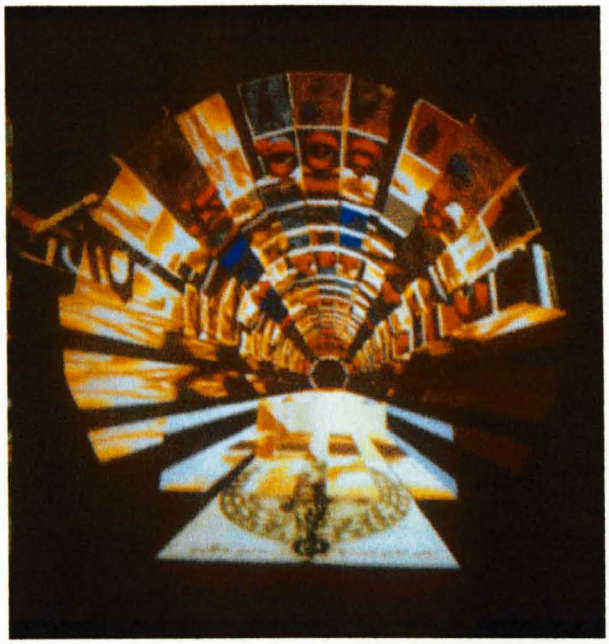
In the diagram above, I have suggested a spiral movement for the planets, as this seems closest to Camillo's ideas from his text. According to Camillo, the central arena of the Theatre rests on Solomon's Seven Pillars of Wisdom. Camillo is not explicit about the movement of any of the other planets, apart from the earth. But the fact that they all rest on the same plane, on the Pillars of Wisdom, suggests that he may have intended that they all move together.

Camillo envisaged a fundamental departure from any illustrative models of planetary arrangement that had existed in the past. Perhaps the work that he made in Paris, or in Venice, illustrating hs ideas, was designed to move.[397] However, this still begs the question of where, for Camillo, was the centre?

[397] If Camillo *did* in fact want the model of the Theatre to move, this may explain why it took him such a long time to work out how to make it – it was a purely mechanical problem.

Chapter Seven:

Not the Whirlpool.



Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680) was the first man to develop the idea of the slide projector. Kircher was a Jesuit scholar, based at the *Collegium Romanum* in Rome. He describes experiments with his magic lantern in his *Ars magna lucis* (Amsterdam, 1671). Pictures in the *Ars magna...* show a large machine with smoke rising from the top; a naked flame in front of a series of lenses throws light on a false wall showing painted images larger than life and illuminated. One image shows a skeletal figure of death, a sickle and hourglass in his bony hands. Another shows a woman, her arms outstretched, in the centre of a consummation by water or fire. At my exhibition at the Collins Gallery, in 2001, a moving image of a VRML (Virtual Reality Markup Language) model of Camillo's Theatre was projected onto the gallery wall. Fortunately for me, it was not necessary to use Kircher's type of contraption. The virtual reality model, made in 2001 at HATII, University of Glasgow, was an essential part of my initial research into Giulio Camillo's work. The model itself was composed of hundreds of computer-generated images. Subsequently these images were transferred into a virtual three-dimensional model. The model was rendered to provide a three-minute movie file. It was this digital file that was continuously projected in the gallery. The aim of the VRML model was to create a visual syntactical structure, using data from Camillo's *L'idea*. Once this visual grammar had been created, it was possible to study the relationships between visual units of meaning within the structure itself.

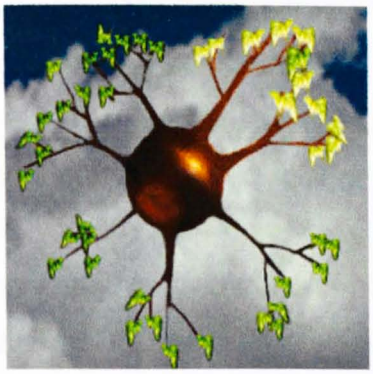
As I hope I have shown in Chapter Six, Camillo's Theatre can be usefully appreciated within the context of astronomy. Camillo proposes a cosmological arrangement which shows that, in terms of planetary positioning, the sun is pre-eminent; and that the earth is on a similar plane to the moon and the planets.[398] However this still leaves the problem of the centre of the Theatre, of finding the optimum position from which the rest of the pantheon may be viewed. In this chapter, I will propose an answer. This is based on three

[398] See Figure 1, p.161.

things: the medieval philosophical theory of the 'coincidence of opposites'; sixteenth century theories of perspective; and the VRML model described above. New optical theories informed Camillo's thinking and were critical in the construction of the Theatre itself. An associate of Titian, Camillo was at the forefront of Italian ideas about pictorial space. Camillo's theories may themselves have had an effect on Serlio's new theories of stage design. As I discuss, the calculus of Camillo's Theatre can, on one level, be assessed in terms of Serlio's ideas of the significance of the 'vanishing point' within a scenic setting. However, Camillo's ideas were not only rooted in perceptual analysis but also in philosophical theories. The origin of Camillo's *artificiosa rota,* for example, the whirlpool of artifice discussed in Chapter One, can be found in the philosophy of Nicolaus of Cusa. As I discuss, Cusa's ideas – his *'Docta ignorantia',* his 'Learned ignorance' - is seminal to the Theatre.

Camillo's ideas were fed by a deep-rooted faith in the power of 'not-knowing'. The reason why, for Camillo, our learning must be ignorant, and our play is really serious, is because it is only by accepting the uncertainty, unpredictability, the randomness and capriciousness of the world that we can begin to come close to it. Things change inside the space of not-knowing. Cusa's learned ignorance helps to elucidate Camillo's serious play, just as there are similarities between Camillo's literary whirlpool of artifice and Serlio's visual vanishing point. One is formed of words and meaning, the other of images and infinity. For Camillo, meaning and infinity were fused.

In this final Chapter, I begin with an analysis of the methodology behind the VRML model and look at how this affected my understanding of Camillo's Theatre. As I discussed in Chapter One, my work on Camillo stems from a working dialogue with contemporary conceptual art. The creation of the model was a significant part of my initial experimental research. I provide a detailed account; the 'visual spadework' involved in making the VRML model, helped to discover the cosmological nature of Camillo's Theatre, breaking away from a system based on a Vitruvian grid, moving towards a more organic type of organism.



Globe Tree, 2003

Initially around two hundred images were composed using Adobe Photoshop Version 4.0. Each of the images was based on information gleaned from Frances Yates's map in *The Art of Memory,* rather than directly from *L'idea del Theatro* (at this stage, as I discuss in Chapter One, I had not yet seen a copy of *L'idea*). Certain rules were created in order to make the task less onerous, and to make it easier to identify the position of images within the scheme. All images were made within a square format, of approximately 10cm.; the images in a certain row, or grade, were given a particular background colour, e.g. all the images that belonged to the level of the Cave had a black background, while the Promethean images had a red/orange background. If Camillo repeated a textual image, though at a different place in the scheme, the same image would be used, though with a different background colour to symbolize its different position. The information from the map was interpreted in a methodical way, but there was no attempt to analyse the meaning behind the text.[399] Visual connections were made with the textual information in a similar way to a crossword puzzle.

At this stage, one of the crucial issues was finding a way in which to store the images and give the images easy identifiers – it was essential to create a storage system that could cope with the information. Folders were made, of image files. These folders followed the vertical grades of the Theatre itself.

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[399] Although the approach was methodical - images were literally 'ticked off' as they were completed - I was intuitive in terms of the order in which I created the images. This was partly because certain images would naturally feed into other images in terms of their subject matter or visual schematisation. This meant that I would tend to 'skip about' from one part of the Theatre to another. In retrospect, this in fact quite closely mirrors the somewhat erratic way in which Camillo describes the images in *L'idea.*

The background colour co-ordinates helped to identify the horizontal position. In the end, it seemed most efficient to opt for a number and letter system for the images themselves, e.g. 'C1' for the first image on the level of the Cave. Another problematic issue regarding these image files was the type of file in which to save them. To be on the safe side, they were saved in a number of formats, each of which has its pros and cons. The initial files were saved as Adobe Photoshop Default files ('*.psd'). This meant that individual layers of the images could be accessed without disturbing the rest of the image, but the files were very large. Another set was saved as Graphic Interchange Format files ('*.gif'). These were less bulky and had the advantage of retaining quality over time. Another set was saved as Joint Photographic Experts Group files ('*.jpg'). In fact I tended to use these most as they are small files, do not use up a great quantity of storage space/memory, and are quickly rendered for display devices. The downside with the '*.jpgs' is that they clearly deteriorate in quality with repeated opening and compression.

In terms of the images themselves, a bricolage technique was used, layering images on top of one another. Images were downloaded from the Internet and from information programmes such as Encarta, to collate all of the material to represent Camillo's material. When it seemed stylistically appropriate, computer-drawing tools were used to modify images – every image, in fact, has been modified in this way. The aim was to give stylistic equivalence to 'manmade' and 'photographic' imagery, while maintaining the integrity of an image as a whole, e.g. an ancient Cretan image of a bull, against a NASA photograph of the planet Saturn. It was also an aim to give formal equivalence to images inherently loaded with 'mythic' or 'historic' or other types of meaning, while, again, aiming to maintain the integrity of the image as a whole, e.g. modern hieroglyphic images of semaphore, with a photograph of a sculpture of Romulus and Remus, with a reproduction of a Renaissance image of the Virgin Mary (representing the image for 'Pasiphae and the Bull' at the level of Mercury). The reason for this formal equivalence was to create a kind of 'visual grammar', in the sense that each image of the Theatre was a distinct unit of visual meaning within the syntactical structure of the Theatre as a whole. While each unit might incorporate within it elements of 'loaded'

imagery, the representation of the unit was specifically in relation to its spatial/syntactical position in the Theatre.

The stylistic integrity of each image was mostly a matter of a gut-reaction. The success or otherwise of the images varies, dependent on this 'gut-reaction' analysis. The integrity of the image in terms of 'meaning' was based on an interpretation of the information from the map. Sometimes this resulted in a simple image, such as 'Narcissus'. There is a clear connection, here, between the image of the flower and the name of the god. Sometimes, it resulted in an ambivalent image, such as 'The Girl with Cut-off Hair'. Sometimes it resulted in a complex image such as 'The Golden Chain' or 'Tantalus under the Rock', or the image quoted above for 'Pasiphae and the Bull'.

Once the representative aspect of the imagery within the Theatre was complete, I worked with an associate from HATII, Carl Smith, to design a structure in which they could be viewed. We used Internet Spacebuilder, version Four. This is a very basic VRML editing tool designed for the Internet. A number of initial attempts at creating a 'building' in which all the images could be placed were unsatisfactory. There were too many images; they kept spilling out of the imaginary walls. It felt pointless to move over a virtual field with a mouse to enter an illusory museum; it was kitsch. Eventually a structure was produced which was not a building in any normal sense of the word. It threw out any notion of a place in which other 'things' were housed. It was erratic, with an impossible architecture. It looked like a scallop shell, a telescope, the centre of an eye; it was irregular though repetitive in form, organic, inconsistent though recognizable. The new Theatre was rendered using 3D Studio Max, version Four. 3D lettering was created and rendered above the entrance to the structure, and as a 'title page image' to the whole work. The original Adobe images were pasted on virtual panels in the interior, referring to the Vitruvian grid of imagery represented in Yates's version of the Theatre. In this way, Yate's version was naturally evolving from a flat semi-circular arrangement into a virtual three-dimensional object of depth.

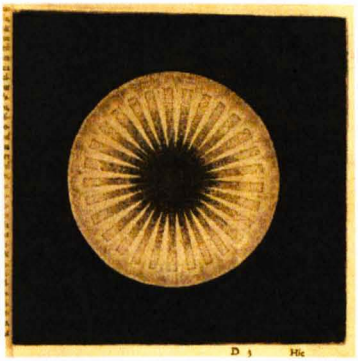
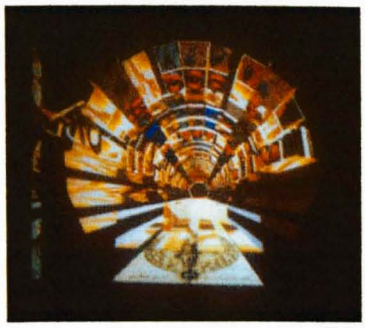


Image from Robert Fludd's *Utriusque Cosmi.*

Once the Theatre was complete, digitised images from Robert Fludd's *Utriusque Cosmi* (Oppenheim: 1617)[400] were pasted onto one side of the structure, leading to the entrance. A number of images were also pasted onto discs that appear above the Theatre, though not attached to the structure. The original Fludd drawings chart a creation story beginning in infinite darkness, subsequently illuminated by light. The series is developed in a number of square format woodcuts, which contain a circular diagram that represents the universe, the earth, god and atoms, all in one. The images on the discs above the Theatre, and on the side of the structure, follow the order in Fludd's work. There were a number of reasons for including these images from Fludd, which I discuss below.

Finally, once all of the images were in place and the structure of the Theatre itself was complete, views of the interior and exterior were manipulated using camera position coordinates. It was re-rendered as an '*.avi' file for animation. Due to technical hitches, partly because the file was so large (421 MB), three versions of the '*.avi' file were created. However, this allowed us to find out whether the Theatre looked well in a cosmological space filled with images of stars or whether it was better that it float in empty space. We opted for the latter.

[400] *Utriusque Cosmi,* itself, is a strange compendium that bridges subjects from creation, to musical instruments, to the inner workings of the eye, to strategies for battle.



VRML model, 2001.

The construction of the VRML model of the Theatre was an important stage in my research. There are aspects of it now that I would do differently, not least of which would be to give the Theatre a new, or no, name. As I discussed in Chapter One Camillo did not in fact create a 'Theatre of Memory': this was Yates's evocative but inaccurate invention; though having said this, I appreciate my debt to Yates's work. Secondly, I would have created and stored all of the original digital artwork at as high a resolution as possible. Subsequently I have seen deterioration in quality of some of the JPEGs. There are a number of formal inconsistencies within the model itself which I think actually contribute value to the work, such as errant walls that do not attach to the main structure, lop-sided entry through the Fludd images (i.e. the viewer does not enter them through the exact centre), vertical as opposed to horizontal writing on the 'title page', sharp 'switching' of camera angles. In fact, I think that all of these anomalies, this slight 'off-centredness', help to hook the viewer. There are other inconsistencies that are less valuable, such as some of the interior images being repeated and others being omitted, though I do not think that this necessarily detracts from the over-all idea. In terms of what I had intended and the end result, it both did not match up to my aims and also far exceeded them. I had wanted all of the images within the Theatre to be interactive in the sense that the viewer would be able to 'step into' them, move into the interior of an image and find another image inside it. I had been imagining this interaction for each individual image. In fact, I think that this is what the Theatre achieved as a whole.

Two years having now elapsed since creating the images, I tested whether by using the 'visual grammar' that I had constructed for the Theatre, it was possible for me accurately to locate images in terms of the overall plan through reading the imagery. I am talking here about the ability to re-place imagery in the correct location.[401] In terms of the definition, above, of simple, ambivalent and complex images, it was relatively easy to locate the position of simple and ambivalent images. The location of 'Narcissus' for example, with a black background, is easily found at the level of the Cave. Likewise the repeated image of the 'Girl with Cut-off Hair' is easily relocated dependant on the background colour. Complex images were harder to locate. At random I picked the image for 'Pasiphae and the Bull', the meaning of which I could not initially remember. Despite the lapse of time, however, it was still possible to reconstruct the original meanings and location in the Theatre by reading the language of the visual image.[402] In terms of how Camillo may have used imagery to connote meaning, I think that this persistence of the significance of the images over time is noteworthy.

Pasiphae and the Bull, 2001

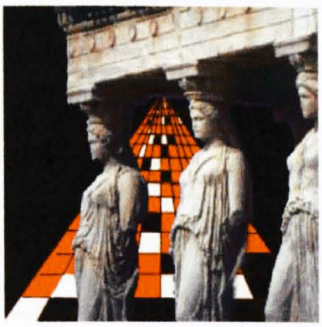
[401] I recently saw my four year old niece playing with a game in which she had to put chunky plastic yellow shapes – crosses, squares, triangles, etc. - into their respective holes in a board. My experiment was similar to this game.

[402] The images of semaphore suggested that it is associated with communication, at the level of Mercury, the messenger planet; the Cretan Bull connects it to the Bull of Pasiphae, the red tongue of the Bull shows that this level is connected to the tongue and to language; the Virgin Mary, leaning forwards pointing to her shoulders, also connects to Pasiphae in terms of femininity but also represents the connection of this level of the Theatre with the shoulders and arms; Romulus and Remus are represented around the stomach area of the Bull to remind of this level to the stomach; all of the figures are placed on the planet of Mercury.

The drawings by Robert Fludd were included in the model of Camillo's Theatre initially to make a connection, between the eclectic creationism of the two authors, one from sixteenth century Italy, the other from seventeenth century Britain. In fact, visually, it highlighted something else. Fludd's 'flat' black and white discs provided a foil for the '3D' colour model of Camillo's Theatre. They acted as the 'veil'. The visual/imaginative experience of the illusion of depth of the interior was sharpened by the illusion of flatness of the portal. In terms of the VRML model as a piece of the research into Camillo's philosophy this juxtaposition was very useful. By passing through the 'flat' veil to find the 'deep' interior, the sense of perspective is altered. The viewer becomes aware that the essential ingredient in Camillo's Theatre is the position of the perceiver to the vanishing point, or infinity. The collaborative work to construct the VRML model of the Theatre was essential for understanding this.

As I discussed in Chapter Two, 'The position of the subject, or perceiver, within the overall plan of Camillo's Theatre, is critical'.[403] I talked about this position as the place of 'absolute reality', 'the sacred centre', and said that the 'subjectivity of this position is so absolute as to be omniscient, although paradoxically, it is held in being by the very objects that it, itself, circumscribes'. It is from this centre that the Theatre is perceived. As I have shown, the Theatre was based on planetary principles. Camillo's astronomical search had led him to look at how we should perceive the universe itself. This, as I discuss, was closely linked to, and was affected by, developments in theories of perspective. I doubt that Camillo envisaged a literal Theatre space in the sense that the stage architect Sebastiano Serlio did. Camillo's Theatre was a conceptual arena. Nevertheless Serlio and Camillo bare comparison on the grounds of the levels of artifice to which they were prepared to go to recreate reality. In this endeavour they were co-discoverers. The 'Theatre', for both of them, was the place in which artifice would uncover truth.

[403] p.58.



Three Pallases at Mercury/Prometheus, 2001

Brunelleschi[404] is credited with being the first to systematize a theory of perspective, in the creation of the Duomo in Florence, completed in 1436. Subsequently, Alberti[405] developed this in terms of painting, with the publication of his *Della Pittura* (1436), and in architecture, with *De Re Ædificatoria* (1485). Perspectival theory was well established, then, by the time that Serlio discussed its use within the context of theatre design. In Serlio's *Libro d'Architettura* (1545), he talks about the use of perspective in a stage setting, saying that it will enable the theatre practitioner to create a magnificent illusion. The crucial issue in creating this chimera is to find the place within the scene that relates to the 'vanishing point'. This, he says, 'is hard to demonstrate' and must change from scene to scene.[406]

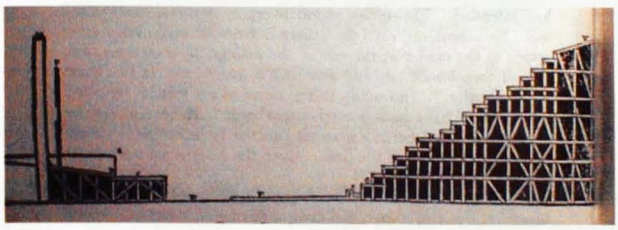


Figure 2
Cross Section of Theatre in Serlio's
Il Primo (Secondo) Libro d'Architettura,
Paris, 1545

[404] Filippo Brunelleschi, (1377-1446).
[405] Leon Battista Alberti, (1404-1472).
[406] Serlio, Sebastiano, trans., Allardyce Nicoll, *The Second Book of Architecture (Il Primo (Secondo) Libro d'Architettura),* Paris, 1545, pp.63-74.

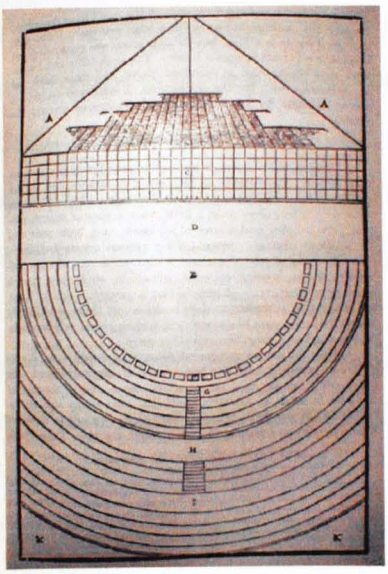


Figure 3

Serlio's Ground Plan of a Theatre. The semi-circular section relates to the auditorium. The rectangular grid represents the front of the stage, and the triangular area at the top relates to the position of the vanishing point, as seen from the auditorium.

The horizontal lines ab-a^2b^2 show the front of the stage. The raked area begins at a^2b^2. Stage scenery, is painted with a base line extending along lines c-d.

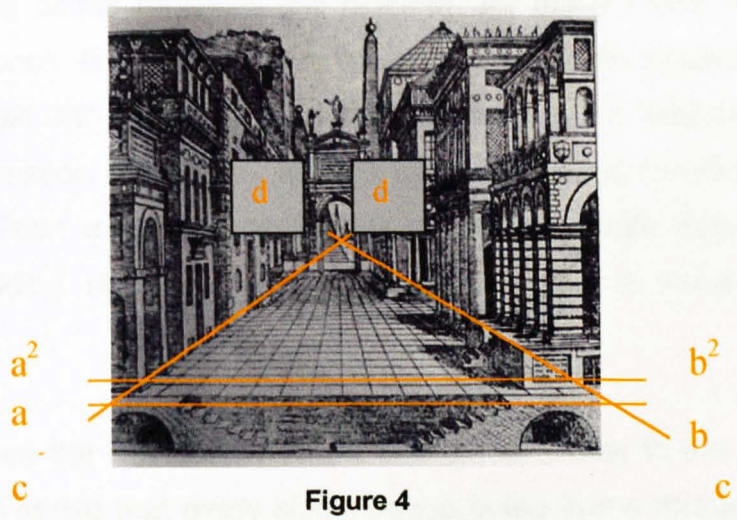


Figure 4

Stage setting from Serlio's *Architettura* (Paris, 1545)

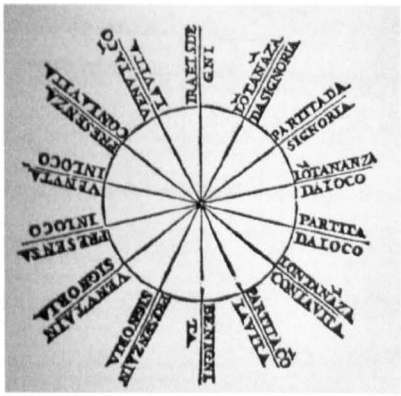
Serlio demonstrates how the stage and auditorium can be arranged in order to achieve the illusion of infinity from the audience's perspective. The stage must be slightly raked, he says, beginning at an area a metre or so from the front edge of the stage (see Figure 1 above, marked at *a*). The horizontal base lines for painted scenery can begin at the extreme right and left of the stage area, extending in a diagonal towards the back of the stage towards the vanishing point (see Figure 2); though if more than one row of houses, for example, was to be portrayed, or there were unusual elements of the scene then the vanishing point for these would be relative to their direction, and their position on the stage.

What Serlio is describing, here, is an immense step in terms of perspective and theatre theory. With the introduction of the proscenium arch, into theatre design, the scene is given a frame and the vanishing point for each scene is worked out from the perspective of the members of the audience sitting in the auditorium (see Figure 2). The theatrical setting is creating an illusion comparable to the illusion of depth that had been achieved in the art of painting, with the added advantage of it being alive. Serlio's actors would animate an optical illusion; inhabit a virtual world.

Camillo's Theatre was not the same as Serlio's theatres. Nevertheless, comparisons can be made in terms of the way that each artist perceived the significance of a view of infinity in their schema. If we apply the principle of perspective to the *images* in Camillo's Theatre, then, in effect, we will have as many vanishing points as there are pictures. As many views of infinity as images in the book. It is tantalising to imagine how Camillo's associate, Titian, would have dealt with this. I think Titian would have had a field-day, encoding Camillo's information in complex images to be read on a number of planes. Camillo and Titian together would have created a whole illusionary world using the building blocks of language and imagery: a three-dimensional dream.

Can we say that the idea for Camillo's Theatre is similar to the modern day Internet, in the sense that every single image is the frame through which the rest of the network can be accessed and witnessed? I imagine that Camillo was so familiar with the layout of the Theatre that he could move around it at will, in the same way that Viola describes the possibility of moving around a predetermined 'data space'. For me, in fact, Camillo is most alive imagined as a performance, or conceptual artist. To hear him speak, giving one of his orations to François 1st, or at the Papal Court, or at the lodgings of Aldus Manutius, in Venice, would have been a rare act. Idea, image and text had equal valence for Camillo. They were part of the outer skin of man, his multi-coloured coat. But Camillo, I think, had such a profound belief in the integrity of the 'inner man', that this outer skin of language and picture could be torn

up, re-assembled, collaged, juxtaposed, broken and renewed without compromise.



Artificiosa rota

To return to Camillo's whirlpool of artifice, the centre is where the reconciliation of opposites is made possible. In the *artificiosa rota* literary opposites are reconciled: 'arrival' becomes 'departure'. They are transformed, according to Camillo, at the centre, in the 'generative nucleus'. In the first publication of *Delle Materie,* in the year of Camillo's death in 1544, a picture of the *rota* is reproduced. In this *rota*, unlike later editions, words are printed across the middle of the wheel. In language reminiscent of Nicolaus of Cusa, Camillo talks about moving from 'antecedents' to 'consequences', from 'opposites [to] all things contrary'. Then he asks a rhetorical question: 'what is the most beautiful and dignified thing we see in the sky?'. In the very centre of the wheel, comes the answer: 'The sun,' he says, 'without a doubt.'

Nicolaus of Cusa's *Docta ignorantia,* or 'Learned Ignorance', was composed in 1440. Cusa (1401-1464) is credited with being the first in the Medieval period to have 'asserted the infinity of the universe'.[407] He was also an early advocate of heliocentrism. Cusa's fifteenth century doctrine of 'Learned ignorance' bares resemblance to the sixteenth century's 'Serious Play', mentioned in Chapter One. Both are views of the world that assert that the only thing we can be certain of is that we do not know anything, even if we pretend otherwise.

[407] Koyré, Alexander, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957) p.6.

According to Cusa God is infinite, while the universe is 'interminate' (*interminatum).*[408] By this he means that the universe is boundless and 'utterly lacks precision and strict determination'.[409] Cusa reasons that *because* the universe is essentially non-definable, we can only hope to understand it by bypassing rationality altogether, and adopting the attitude of 'Learned Ignorance'. Wherever the observer is positioned in the earth, 'he will believe himself to be in the centre,' says Cusa. Therefore the observer, on his own, will never achieve an accurate picture of the whole. In order to begin to appreciate the universe at large, distinct from one's own subjective point of view, one must combine 'diverse imaginations', i.e. multiple pictures of the world, superimposing them together. This will allow the observer a fuller picture, but it will still not be complete. The observer must therefore 'practise learned ignorance'. 'Learned ignorance' itself, is an ongoing outlook that aims to circumvent rational thought. Adopting this attitude, the viewer will begin to see that the world is 'Incorrigibly plural'.[410] 'It will appear almost as a wheel within a wheel, and a sphere within a sphere, having nowhere...either a centre or a circumference'.[411]

Cusa believed in the coincidence of opposites. All greatness and smallness, nearness and distance, the immediate and the remote, are united, for Cusa, within the 'infinite equality' of God. Opposites are reconciled and transformed into their contrary position. For Cusa, everything in the universe is relative, because only the absolute belongs to God.[412] 'The absolute, infinite maximum does not, any more than the absolute, infinite minimum, belong to the series of the great and small. They are outside it, and therefore,' concludes Cusa, 'they coincide.'[413] God is both at the centre of everything as well as at the

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[408] Koyré, p.8.
[409] That is, 'not only that [the universe] is boundless and is not terminated by an outside shell, but also that it is not 'terminated' in its constituents, that is, that it utterly lacks precision and strict determination'. See Koyré, p.8.
[410] Macneice, Louis, *Snow,* in Ed. MacBeth, George, *Poetry 1900-1975,* (London: Faber & Faber, 1979).
[411] Cusa, Nicolaus, *De docta ignorantia,* 1. II, cap. ii, p.102., quoted in Koyré, p.17.
[412] Koyré, in fact, says that we should *not* attribute to Cusa a 'purely relativistic conception of space, such as, for instance, Giordano Bruno imputes to him' (p.14.). My own attribution of relativity to Cusa, following in Bruno's footsteps, is not absolute, but merely relatively relative.
[413] *Ibid.* pp.9-10.

edges: 'He is the centre of the earth and of all the spheres...He is at the same time the infinite circumference of all.' [414]

Just as Cusa believes in the coincidence of greatness and smallness, nearness and distance, Camillo imagines a system in which the 'material' of ideas is transformed into its contrary substance. In the *artificiosa rota,* Camillo was dealing with language. Inside the *gorgo dell'artificio,* the 'whirlpool of artifice', Camillo believed the opposites of the *rota* were reconciled. This was the no-man's land in the centre of the wheel where there was a space for unpredictability and change. In terms of the *rota* this change was specifically literary. Camillo intended that a similar operation was at work in his Theatre. In the Theatre, Camillo envisaged a system in which each one of his images, which were the *loci* or places of the 'material' of ideas, could be the ground for change. It was a more complex system than the *rota* because it dealt not only with language, but imagery as well. The transformation, in terms of the Theatre, was a visual revolution.

In Camillo's conceptual Theatre, there is no stage. The images themselves are the vistas of action. Camillo is imagining a space that is, itself, potentially infinite.[415] The signs in the Theatre, as well as being doorways to infinity, give clues for direction; they are route markers, to be mapped and followed, showing a way through the image-maze.

To return briefly to Athanasius Kircher, with whom this chapter began, this Jesuit scholar had a collection of artefacts that was famous throughout the world. Housed at the *Museum Kircherianum* in Rome, it was crammed with objects of a scientific nature from archaeological relics to cosmological maps to esoteric and religious pieces from the orient and Asia, along with Kircher's own voluminous illustrated writings. Amongst these is the *Oedipus*

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[414] *Ibid.* p.12.

[415] Perhaps Cusa's definition of an 'interminate' universe, is more accurate in that the associative connections created by the imagery of the Theatre is boundless and non-definable. The fact that we now know there are more than seven planets and that the distances involved in the scope of the universe are vastly greater than was known in the Renaissance does not negate Camillo's *belief* that he was dealing with the fundamental, and complete, set of 'universal building blocks' that was then available.

Aegyptianus (1652-4). There is an image of Pan in the *Oedipus...* Interpretation of this image of Pan can be assisted by reference to Giulio Camillo, from whom I think the image itself may derive. Like Bocchi's image of Pan in the *Symbolicae questiones...*, Kircher's Pan is standing in a meadow. However, instead of pointing to his horns, he holds a shepherd's staff, and in the palm of his other outstretched hand, the globe of the world. Pan's horns represent 'the tower of the heavenly rays upon sublunary nature'.[416] His fingers touch his syrinx – the Pan Pipes. Radiating from the syrinx are concentric bands showing the cosmos. Each of the planets is connected to the musical harmonies created by the seven pipes.

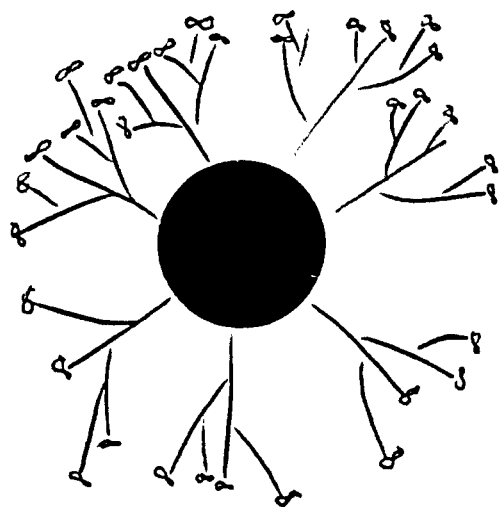
Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptianus*

It is hard now not to associate this image with a diabolical figure; the ancient god of the flocks has a long history. But, as the key to the 'Hieroglyphs' around Pan's body demonstrates, this picture of Pan represents health and wholeness. The earth bristles with plants, seeds and trees. Springs of water germinate the soil. The planets are balanced in harmony. In Kircher's version, the cosmological arrangement of the planets is Ptolemaic. The sun is in the fourth sphere. And yet the similarity between this image and Camillo's Pan of the cosmos is striking. Here we find an image of Pan both at the centre and at the circumference of worlds, in the midst of the countryside and outside it,

[416] Godwin, Joscelyn, *Athanasius Kircher* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), p. 59 Godwin has interpreted the meanings of the 'Orphic Writings' associated with the letters on the figure.

holding a universe in the palm of his hand, the crook of his shepherd's staff hooking the sky.

Theoretically, the centre of the Theatre can be anywhere. But I think Camillo believed there is one unifying position from which the entire Theatre most truly is perceived. Wherever the observer is positioned in the earth, according to Cusa, 'he will believe himself to be in the centre'. But the deepest centre, the place from which – and to which – all the vanishing points of the images within the Theatre are directed, is the source. This is the place where all of the 'diverse imaginations' are reconciled. This is the 'generative nucleus'. It is the centre of the whirlpool.



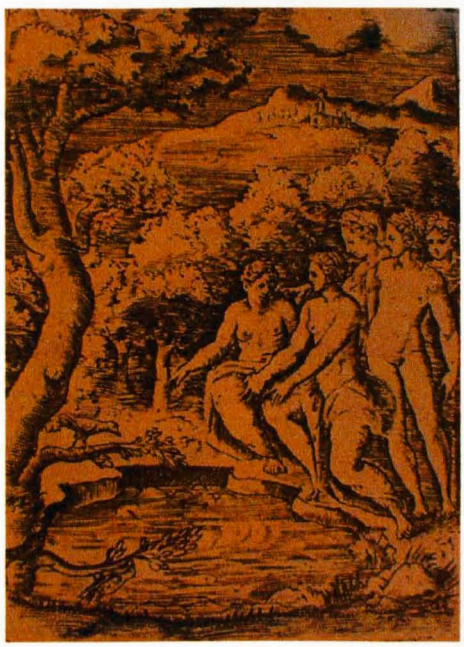
The Theatre as a conceptual space.

● = centre
∞ = infinity.

Seven planetary stems emerge from the central arena. From these stems, extend subsidiary branching images.

Epitaph

Giulio Camillo c.1480-1544.



Eleven years after Camillo's death, an emblem was made in his memory by his friend, Achille Bocchi. It has a short Latin text and a woodcut by the artist, Giulio Bonasone. The woodcut shows a nightingale on the branch of a tree looking into a pool of water. The nightingale is singing a song. On the other side of the pool stands a flock of river naiads, laughing at the little nightingale, because they see that he has been fooled by his own reflection in the water. Thinking that he is in the company of a rival, the nightingale sings louder and eventually dives into the pool to have it out with his supposed contender. But he finds that he is the only bird there, and emerges from the empty pool dripping in water. There is silence as he flies off into the blue.

The emblem can be read as an adaptation of the myth of Narcissus. Narcissus fell in love with his own reflection in a pool of water and was eventually transformed into the flower that bares his name; while Echo, the nymph who loved him, unrequited, faded into the mountains. Where Narcissus sees, the nightingale hears. Where Echo, unseen, listens and repeats, the naiads listen and laugh in clear view. Narcissus sighs for love; the nightingale competes. This homage to Camillo is a strange, and ambivalent epitaph. The nightingale is challenging nothing but his own reflection yet his mighty, if pointless struggle produces music and laughter, which cannot be bad.

Maybe Bocchi intended that the naiads' laughter, in his emblem for Camillo, was to smack of ridicule. Or maybe he meant us to remember that the naiads themselves *are* the water in which the nightingale sees his reflection. And as the essence, or Being, of the water itself, there must be an element of recognition in their mirth.

Appendix I

Treatise on Imitation

Giulio Camillo

Translated by F. Robinson

1529/1530

Written in the vernacular

Not published until the year of Camillo's death, with another pamphlet, *Due trattati dell'Eccellentissimo M. Iulio Camillo: L'Uno Delle Materie [...]: L'Altro Della Imitazione,* Venice, de Farri, 1544, but it circulated around Padua in manuscript form.

But what shall I say of you, Erasmus, man of so much knowledge and virtue, whom, for your book *The Ciceronian*, all those among the public who delight in Cicero would raise from the masses, not only as eloquent, but also of good judgement? It is most advisable that you prepare the strongest defence, if by chance you have the opinion of imitation that you make the world feel in your writings, or if men should wish that what you may have written in earnest, perhaps be taken in jest. For myself, I am certain that in *The Ciceronian* you had rather exercised the divine strength of your genius than spoken outright your own true feelings. Turn, oh unique genius, change your style, and you yourself will be content to say the opposite of what you have written, if, as I believe, you feel the opposite. Conquer yourself, that no other be able to conquer you. Think what obligation eloquence will have over you when you yourself, who have shown how much you can damage them with your authority, show them how much more the same can be of use to them, writing only what you feel in your soul. See eloquence rush towards you in tears in its desire to be yours. This it begs you for mercy, and for your name's sake, for the holy food you have drunk at its breast, and for the ornaments it has acquired for you, and you for it, not wishing to do it harm. And do not excuse yourself on grounds of ignorance or of being unable to do otherwise; which gives me, who am the least and newly-arrived admirer of its beauties, drawn

by the zeal I hold for truth and your honour, the heart to write you a few words, which if I am not mistaken, will in some way adumbrate the truth. These, even if they cannot attain the height of your genius, I beg you to accept as if they were yours in the hands of your detractors in order that your truths, from a broader and more eloquent gift, go out into the presence of the world.

I think, then, that when you recover yourself, you will say, and much better than I, that the Latin language, like indeed everything else on earth, has had its sunrise, midday and sunset. And just as it cannot be denied that the sun has no greater force or more striking beauty at midday than on rising or setting, so we can rest in agreement that all things that begin to be, and after some time reach their peak and then finally decline, are more perfect at their peak than their beginnings or decline. And Latin having been one of these things, we are drawn to admit that if we wish to find its perfection it is not necessary that we should consider it in its nascent or decadent state, but when it was strongest and most vigorous. And so given that if we wish to believe history and truth, the peak of the Latin language was in the century of Cicero and Caesar, which century alone we are to hold as perfect, it follows that much that went before or after is like children incapable of speech or old men already babbling. The fact is that those that were close to, whether before or after, were closer to that we value so much.

It suited Cicero to write that Latin eloquence was close to its maturity in his time; and that peak, beyond which it could go no further, inevitably threatened its decline as close by. Whereas some writers, who wrote in the language towards the sunset excused themselves in their books for not being able to write in perfect Latin since in their time the language was already in decline; and yet there are many with perverted taste who prefer to imitate not only childish but infantilised language, rather than that which in its strongest time used words full of maturity, wisdom and beauty. It is, therefore, in Cicero's golden century that Latin attained what excellence and peak it might; on this account all other ages, before and after, would smack of imperfection. And to put it better, language growing more beautiful, as time goes by, each

succeeding age used the language of its predecessor with some improvement. From which can be understood how ill-conceived were those who wish to reproduce the language of all authors indiscriminately, since they might prefer to use words abandoned as out-of-date in the age of gold, or those that, the language declining, were lowborn, without great beauty, from roots now deprived of sap. In the genteel age, the language was like a garland woven by the most beautiful virgin, in which there were certain flowers that never faded; others, from weakness, could not live as equals with the stronger. Whence the virgin with a wise hand, at the right moment, plucked the languid flowers and replaced them with fresh ones, without interrupting the garland's harmony. But shortly after the death of Cicero the virgin in charge of the garland died, and the task was given to another, because, completely dry from the roots, the Latin meadow no longer blossomed with the flowers which refreshed the garland, ever more charming to sight. And if we wish to enjoy those flowers, because they can no longer be gathered in the meadow, it is necessary we return to the remaining garland, the virgin dead.

My words say that the Latin language is no longer spoken, as is our popular, or the French tongue. It is fixed in books, and we, who are not born to its bosom, if we wish to possess it, must gather it from those books where it is enclosed. I speak not of those who say it is possible to hope for another garland, made of flowers without perfume: a false copy of the original, in which can be seen no lustre of words nor beauty of order nor subtlety of composition, but only of those that can give us all these ornaments. Books differing as mediocre, good and perfect, decline according to the mediocrity, goodness, perfection and decline of the centuries. And, being confined to gather the language not from men's mouths but from books, why not rather from the perfect than the less good? If I, who am a foreigner, can get almost everything from the perfect century, why should I mix, in another language, vocabulary and modes of speech, which did not please the gravest judgement of those who, in the most happy century, spoke, wrote and could judge in that language?

I do not wish we should use their chosen words so much that from the use and profit we make ourselves manifest thieves. But that, in the first place, we reduce the language to that essence of which it was composed between Virgil and Cicero. When anything born in the author's own mind appears before us, my advice would be to fabricate, be it by artifice, one of our own of equal beauty, but through the approved authors' language, transforming it through composition as does the bee which although it makes honey by virtue of the flowers, which are not its own, nevertheless transforms it such that we might not recognise in its works which flower imparts its virtue to this or that part of the honey. So, all the honey deriving by virtue of the bee, this appears, and is called, honey, and no longer flowers.

That I might be better understood, three main orders can be determined to clothe each of our concepts: the characteristic, the metaphorical, and that which we will call throughout our undertaking *topico;* in each of which, according to the nature of the material, eloquence is seen to be clothed. I maintain that there are some materials which are content with their own properties; others wish to be called metaphors, either because in that place the metaphor has more force, or it would bring ornament to it; others wish to be almost placed before the reader's gaze via topical expressions, taking their images now from innate characteristics, now from metaphor. And although this third order is so much the poet's that without it he could place no marvels in the reader's mind, the orator also in some respect shares this skill suited to him: which is to draw down from heaven rather than blow with Cicero. But in my opinion, while we use precision or the busy metaphor outwith the topical mode, we can very reasonably say that we have used the same thing the author used, rather than that we have imitated him, since the imitation that we make is not the same, but similar. Because, I believe, the imitation is entirely of the model, since the words, whether precise or metaphorical, the authors used are free. And also if sometimes saying the same thing is called imitation, imitation should be taken in its widest sense.

So, wishing to use Latin words, we cannot do this without taking those that the authors have said, either without censure or at the risk of censure. Without

censure while, as I have said, we use correct or metaphorical words. These have been used by many authors in that way, use thus making them correct: even Cicero and Virgil themselves have taken from authors who went before them. Who, wishing to write correct Latin, could more correctly call *l'amore* but *amor?* And when one or other among them says *ardour,* even though it be a metaphor, nevertheless you would not say that what many before him had said, was his brainwave; which, therefore, we also can use without fear of being thieves, and in using it cannot be said that we imitate, but that we say the same thing, if the meaning of the imitation relates to the author, not to the words. But when we dare to use metaphors that that author alone has created through his art or that subject matter said only by him, I judge that we may risk being called usurpers or thieves, if we are unable to transform these in our composition as the bee transforms the flowers in its works with the honey. And to speak of that topic where metaphor is also seen; if I said on being born "nasci", I would not merit censure in writing Latin such as all Romans used to speak, where correctness had place; but if I said "uscir ne' paesi della luce"[417], as Lucretius put it, in my opinion I would be at risk of comment for thus employing massively the same words – which possibly phrased otherwise would be praiseworthy because of the argument I might be presenting. But the great praise I might earn in this third area is supposing that, Lucretius' art uncovered, I be able to make a figure of no less beauty, without stealing. Because, Lucretius's art known, which was to lift the figure from the source of the successors, I will be able to form from the same source, another, of equal or even greater beauty, which would be entirely mine, apart from the words in which it was expressed.

And to give a flavour of this art, which comes to light through myself, I say that from among those same sources can be formed the figures we call "topics", from which the arguments. It is a fact that sometimes there will be a source which will make the argument very strong, and contrarily, there will be another from which, if we draw the argument, it will be of little force, but if we draw the figure, it will be robust; whether from sources, from antecedents, successors

[417] "go out into the lands of light"

or surrogates. The reason why the antecedents and successors have need of it, but the surrogates do not, is because the arguments deriving from the successors and antecedents are vigorous, and those born among the surrogates are lacking great strength. And by grace of example, this argument is needed by the successors and antecedents; "se il sole è levato, che sia giorno"[418] because it falls to our consideration that the sun being the cause of the day, the rising of the sun precedes the day. So these are of necessity antecedent and successor. But from these cannot be added of necessity: "se fa strepito co' piedi, adunque camina"[419] because even sitting we can move the feet in such a way as to make a noise. From these examples the argument bearing necessity is seen to be stronger, and that which does not, to be weak. Sometimes the figure which will be treated in a *loco* will lack necessity; that is to say the *loco* of the additions, which covers things which are not necessary but can be added, will have more vigour than that which is removed from the necessary *loco*. We will give an example on sighing. When I say "sospirar"[420] I am using the correct term, whereas the composed phrases will say the same thing but will be almost pure metaphor: "mandar sospiri, gittar sospiri"[421]. But if I say "romper l'aere da presso coi sospiri"[422], this would be a topical figure drawn from the necessary *loco,* i.e. from the successors, since it follows of necessity of sighing that the air, which is in front of the mouth of the person sighing, will be struck and split with the sigh. Nevertheless, if I wished to draw the figure from the *loco* of the additions, where it is not of necessity, and said "far coi sospiri tremar le cose opposte, far mover le frondi, crollare I boschi"[423], this would have more strength; since it is not necessary that things opposite tremble from sighing unless they are very weak or close by. But in my opinion the poet in this natural philosophy of illustrating topically would be wise to abandon things that are too far beyond the truth, such as "far tremar le frondi"[424], still more "i sospiri crollino i

[418] "if the sun has risen, it must be day".
[419] "if noise is made with the feet, one is walking".
[420] "to sigh, sighing".

[421] "to give a sigh, to heave a sigh".
[422] "to split the surrounding air with sighs".
[423] "to make things opposite tremble with (my) sighs, to move the leaves, to collapse the woods".
[424] "make the leaves tremble".

boschi".[425] Equally, the illustration of weeping "portar gli occhi molli"[426] or "aver gli occhi umidi"[427] is born of necessary consequences, since it is not possible to weep without getting the eyes wet and moist. But if someone were said to "bagnasse con gli occhi l'erba et il petto",[428] this illustration would have more vigour and yet would not be born of necessary consequences, but from additions, because one could weep without bathing one's breast or the grass. So the latter is illustration and the former simply tells the truth.

Thus Virgil, wishing to clothe "inserir"[429] in a topical illustration, not only having taken the necessary *loco* of the consequences, but close behind, that of the additions, ruled that, wishing to say the pear tree could be grafted onto the flowering ash, it concerned what might be the consequence. So he thought that the pear of necessity inserted into the flowering ash, if it had to live, caused it to have to flower; which he said because often the flowering ash would become white with the pear's flowers. But having to say that into the elm could be inserted the oak, he looked not to the necessary, but to the additional; so he said pigs will often eat the acorns beneath the elms; and yet what he said did not follow of necessity, since the oak inserted into the elm could be in a place where pigs will never go.

And to return to Lucretius's illustration, the one he made concerning birth, forming it from consequences (because it is a necessary fact that following on the birth, one goes out from the shadows of the mother's belly into the world of light); in imitation of his I can make another illustration of the same *loco,* without usurping his. I rule (considering as consequence of the child being born that he who was not accustomed in the mother's belly to feel other than a continuously pleasant warmth, on being born, began to feel the variety in quality of our air) that if I said he "had come to test the heat and cold", it would not be a less beautiful illustration than that of Lucretius. And if I returned to such things as happened before birth, I would form the illustration from the

[425] "the sighs brought down the forests".
[426] "to have wet eyes".
[427] "to have moist eyes".
[428] "to have bathed the grass and one's breast with one's eyes".
[429] "insert".

preceding, necessary *loco*; as if, following the line of the Platonists, I were to say he "came down from the spheres, or from the motionless heaven beyond the spheres, and dressed in earthly limbs, or of humanity, to show himself to the world"; or, if the material required it, make some polite allusion via mystical theology to the fable of Pasiphaë with the Bull to signify, not, as Pelefato believes and writes, unbridled lust, but the descent of the soul into the body.

And whosoever wishes to form an illustration simply from the birth of the additions, can take all that might follow without necessity, namely: "to open his eyes to the things of the world, or the eyes of others to sense the mortal". And further to consider that of the additions, some are true, some false: the true are all those of which even to this *loco* we have given examples and which can be in common to the poet and the orator, although the orator will use them temperately; the false are only those of the poet, which Virgil claimed writing to Pollion, that at a child's birth, flowers should be put in the cradle and, renewed, the age would return to gold. Which additions are founded on similarity, cause and effect, and so are not pure additions; since comparing the birth of the child to the birth of the sun in the spring, those things that can be consequent upon the risen sun might be added to the born child; because it may occur that accompanying the sun, some of them might be in some way necessary, but accompanying the birth of the child they are not only additions, but false additions. They are also said to be founded on cause and effect since the sun is the cause whereby the earth sends forth flowers, which it attaches as confections to cradles, and the flowers are, as it were, effects. Also, from the movement of the sun, the centuries may move from iron to gold; which effect Virgil poetically applies to the birth of the child, which is like a blurred sun.

These false additions are even more beautiful when they are placed together such that one proceeds from the other, such as are in Catullus's *Argonautica,* where the poet, wishing to illustrate the Argonaut's first voyage, thought what might be added artificially to it: for which reason he said the nymphs put their heads out of the sea, filled with great wonder on spying a truly great engine in

their realm. And then suddenly he adds this, too: coloured eyes on the ship would be favoured on that and another day, by seeing the marine goddesses. So, since it does not follow of necessity that the Nereids should put their heads out of the sea at a maiden voyage and that mortal eyes might enjoy the sight of the goddesses, and both illustrations are born of the additions; and since it is not sure testimony that in such wise factual goddesses really exist, we say the additional statements to be false. And if imitation can somehow be found in the words, certain among these are sure to be of the topical order, in which we can imitate only the author's artifice. To be able to imitate it well, we should always hold the said illustrations before us without damaging them and without simply repeating them in such a way that we might render them similar; but in some true, courteous way make them our own.

Supposing, by way of example, we lost the art of making bricks, which could not be had other than in old buildings incorporating the art of brickwork; and an architect of our day wished to make a beautiful building following the design which he had created in his mind. Without doubt he would be obliged to raze to the ground some old building and fulfil the task using these baked stones. And if he were an architect of worth, he would not just pick up from the old building, to put in his own, pieces of wall which would be recognised as not his; but reduce the entire wall to a pile of stones, the one separated from the other, just as they were when the first builder put them to work. It is true that when he came to the cornices, the columns, or some other marble figure that might be in some alcove, this he should conserve almost intact, either by making of it something similar from its example, or by making it in some prudent way become his own. And although we should not cull from authors all their words, also we should not simply order them higgledy-piggledy. For certain correct words, as well as metaphorical ones, should go together and so be conserved and used. Nevertheless all those which are not to be separated should be, as it were reduced to their principles, while following, with their companions, the authors' use.

O most Christian, most happy King Francis, these are the treasures and riches of eloquence Your Majesty's servant, Giulio Camillo, sets forth for you.

These are the paths you will ascend to immortality. Through these will you be able to rise to such height that the other kings of the world will lose their sight if they wish to look upon you, not in the Latin enterprise alone, but also the French muses will be able through these ornaments to walk as equals with the Greeks and Romans. Long live Your Highness in pure felicity, and lacking any thing among the ornaments of your most high genius, the great work I lay before you will most certainly bring it unto you.

But to return to those who reject imitation, consider, for heaven's sake, to how much stupidity writings are brought which are born of their false opinion, and all the great discord there is among them on their account, and even this: that through their compositions for some time hence they cannot be recognised as belonging to any century, but as by eccentric writers and from stubbornness they have not wished to agree with the opinions of the wise, nor reason, nature, or art. What is more, if they read the perfect ones, they will find written in the second of Cicero's *Oratore* that those excellent writers there have been in all the good centuries are always all agreed in imitating a perfect one. And there would not be conformity of style in their writings if they had not – all those of the same opinion will agree – imitated someone; for the reason that while their books are being read, it can be judged, from the universal form with which they are in accord, which were from one century and which from another. But if all these writers who write without a norm were put together, it could not be judged which are from the same period and which from different ones. Not in the same one: because these still do not have any model towards which they all look, so that when they conflict, some of the good are involved in their disagreements and it seems that all have sworn to do the worst they could. They can no longer be judged as writers of different epochs, because "period" cannot be found in what might be compared from similarity of opinion, whence it emerges that none of them wishes to dedicate himself to a language which might be referred to a period. It is a fact that there might be hope, if the opinion were true of our return to this world, that when these return, they alone will be able to recognise it, if the memory of such blind opinion and hard obstinacy has still not left them.

What more can I say? Although not born into the Latin language, they dare to introduce I do not say topical figures, I do not say laudable translations, but new correctness of language, because Cicero or others from that time and language dared to do so and to persuade [others] that so should be done, while this language continued in use. Would you laugh, you Gauls, if I, a foreigner, wished to add words to your language? Of course. I, coming to you and living with you, will be able to learn your language, but not perhaps add words to it as faithfully as might one of you. And if you laugh while I am trying to be so bold in your language, which nevertheless flourishes in the mouth and hands of the great King and so many others who add to it, Caesar and Cicero would laugh still more from where they are, if they could see these new monsters. It would certainly be a minor error if they imitated a Pliny or one less good, because they could hope that they had been intended from a similar century to the one they were in. And because many oppose me, saying that neither Caesar nor Cicero managed to say all that can be said – on the grounds, they affirm, that if we wish to grasp one of these perfect ones we will have to refrain from saying anything that had not been said by the author, and so become impoverished and not capable of saying anything – to these I reply that in order to be able to have gold I want neither silver nor iron; nor, since gold might not be available in some places, do I wish to abandon it, seeing that silver and iron can be widely available to me everywhere. But when all the gold has been used, and some part of the work requires addition, I will turn to the silver, but never to the iron. The reason is from knowing that in the great workshop of my "Teatro" are disposed through *lochi* and images all the places necessary to locate and minister to all human concepts, everything in the entire world, not only those pertaining to all sciences and the noble and mechanic arts.

I know well that these my words will produce wonder and make men incredulous so that effect not reach sense; however, I beg them who read this part, to be content with an example I shall give, so clear that it may well give indication of the truth. Pay attention, I pray. Before the twenty-two letters of our alphabet were discovered, if anyone had offered to give twenty-two characters with which could be noted down all our thoughts, by which

everything we talk of could be written down, would he not have been mocked? And yet we see that these few letters comprising the alphabet are sufficient to express everything, and of the proof that it is everything, the mischief they write makes manifest faith. Next, if henceforth there be found books already written, a number of the letters of the alphabet lost, and someone wanted to promise to take them all out of books to a certain, small number, should he be mocked by those, who deserving of even greater mockery, seeing books are full of letters would be inclined to believe they were all different and that one does not return to them often while writing? I well know that all those who have heard of my discovery mock me at present since they perceive nothing but words; and yet it is true. Before the predicaments of Aristotle had been seen, who would ever have believed that everything in heaven, on earth, and in hell could be reduced to ten principles? And yet they exist, and all can see, read and know for themselves that a mere ten are enough. Will it appear similarly to these my calumniators if I volunteer to give all human concepts and everything that can be spoken of in a sufficient figure? Even if they rose to more than ten thousand, there are of them no more than three hundred and forty three Governors, and of these Governors, forty-nine Captains, and of the Captains only seven Princes. I remain silent on the many hidden secrets in great number; I refrain from performing those wonders that embarrassment and modesty will not at present allow me to reveal.

Since we have so many *lochi* with so many images, which can minister not only matters full of erudition and artefacts with new styles directed towards sensation, but also words and all things spoken in their orders as may suffice for all human concepts, my council has been to make a detailed analysis of the most perfect authors so that all the *lochi* have been enriched by the language of the most noble writers and have not been contaminated by the language of imperfect ones. Such that, just as I have said, where I have the fashion of working in gold, I have wished for neither silver, nor iron, nor lead. But because some *lochi* have not been used by those felicitous authors, I have deigned to make use of silver in order that we have all our concepts, those spoken of and those not mute.

To speak openly, it seemed to me that one of three ways had to be observed in such cases of weakness. The first is that, where able, we should rather take vocabulary lacking in perfect authors from some writer close to them, than of our own licence. Although vocabulary not used by Caesar, Cicero and the like is for the most part vocabulary relating to some art and authors in that art, such as medicine, agriculture, the military and so on, all the remainder adorn my *lochi.* This is the first way to fill up the lacunae. The second, again practised by Cicero and other good writers, is to put Greek where it should be Latin. The third way I judge to be circumlocution, which can still be employed to express all those things which from not having been in use among the ancients have also never had vocabulary, such as bombing, hunting, and what we call in Italian "capiton di fuoco"[430] and the like.

These three ways have thus supplied us with enough words for all the concepts, and these have reached a number sufficient to say everything that can be expressed by the spoken word or the pen. Just as, in effect, if the alphabet lacked the letters "F" and "R" it would be a lacuna – because although the words "God", "Angel" and all those without "F" or "R" could be written, if "Roi François" were to be written, the alphabet would be manifestly imperfect – so imperfection would exist in my Theatre if a concept could be imagined or thought which did not have its *loco*, which we have sought to avoid through abundance. And in the same way that having learned, but without experience, the letters of the alphabet, we would begin by writing these words "Roi François" with difficulty, after some days, the habit formed, these words would flow from the inkwell of their own volition, so the order of my places having been learned, the inexperienced mind would have difficulty for a few days, but soon, thanks to custom acquired in little time and with no effort in this scheme, it would earn great praise for the nobility emanating from its imitations.

But to bring back to the right road those who abandoned it only to flee imitation of some perfect authors, I remember having read in a little work of

[430] Lit.: "eel of fire".

Denys of Helicarnassus written (I believe) for Rufus Melitius, that a writer can never hope for immortality for his writings if he disregards three tenses: the past, the present and the future. The past, because we should take note of what was perfect in previous centuries: and to determine that, as Cicero puts it, requires long reflection and good judgement[431]. We must also concern ourselves with those in the present, I mean those in our own time, who seem gifted with prudence and judgement; because it is from them that we should take counsel, provided they are free of all passion and full of good words, to see whether our composition is close to the perfect idea of eloquence they have in their minds. This is why Cicero says in *De Oratore* that it is always the prudence of the listeners which determines the norm of eloquence. And in truth when Cicero had to make a speech to what perfection of discernment would you not believe he was led by the knowledge that he was to be heard by a Caesar, a Pompey, a Brutus? Do you not think that he would have assembled all the resources of his genius to please these men, who held without doubt pride of place in eloquence specifically, or at least aspired to what is close to having pride of place? Finally we must have regard to the future centuries, thinking of all that might displease those who will come after us. Some would say this is impossible to know. For myself, I concede that we cannot know it entirely; but I say yet that we can forecast it, since if we have imitated the perfect ancient authors well in all that can and should be imitated, we cannot be criticised without the author we have imitated being criticised. Following Denys's argument I do not know how an eternal posterity will receive the writings of those who disdain to wish to imitate a perfect author; because their thought is not directed towards any of the true times: not the past, since among past authors they find none noble or sure enough to resemble him; neither do they submit themselves to the judgement of men of the present, who all, provided they have tasted the pleasures of eloquence, at least agree that a thousand men have been able to see more than a single one.

[431] "consiglio" ("consilium"), i.e. the faculty of "judgement" which governs action and determines "prudence".

And how do you think the perfect author who should be our model, arrived at perfection? It is certain that of himself he put in nothing but what was of his nature and the little good that can be expected of an individual along with the effort of having observed and combined things elegantly in his composition. Thus what was observed by our author came from elsewhere; since what there was of good in what happened to have been said by the first authors was observed by those who had [good] judgement; and before so many fine ways of speaking – come across by chance – were observed, they were not all present in any single author. But since those who took pleasure in artifice continued to observe them from century to century, finding a thousand beauties amid a thousand rusticities, but dispersed at this point such that in each mass there would gleam but one among a host of shadows, finally the epoch arrived which, thanks to those who had been able to observe, there could be seen together infinite observations, that is, infinite perfections. These served as norms for some perfect mind, resulting in these perfections previously dispersed among several authors, all being visibly resplendent in a single one. As a result, whoever imitates a perfect author imitates the perfection of a thousand authors condensed in him, and so much the better when this perfection of the one appears continuously, and not gathered in a particular part of the composition, as may be seen with certain of the first authors.

We should also bear in mind that if we do not imitate a perfect author, but ourselves, there can only be found in ourselves that small amount of beauty that nature and chance may give an individual. It is in this good opinion that the noble art of drawing, on which depend painting and sculpture, should give us comfort; since neither of these twin arts achieved its apogee because a painter or sculptor was satisfied with his own genius, or because wishing to have a perfect work, he had taken the likeness of a single person in particular; the heavens never gave a single individual all the perfections. On the contrary, Zeuxis's choice was to distribute the most beautiful parts among several virgins; and he associated them with the beauty he had formed in his mind, the most perfect designer of those secrets to which neither art nor nature can attain. But, following Zeuxis's choice, it is not necessary for us to

presume to distribute what is most beautiful between several beings, as did Cicero or some other perfect author; for this work, the latter attests to have been indicated to us in all the genres of style which Zeuxis did in order to represent a very beautiful girl. As for myself, I do not intend at present to spread my examples through all aspects of eloquence, but only through expression.

Cicero, having been born into the Latin language and rendered his epoch flourishing (it also flourished thanks to other men of genius), as well as having read with great care authors who had preceded him, along with men replete with science, fine language and good judgement, which he strived in addition to satisfy; Cicero, then, knew how to assemble the beauties of the Latin language and exclude from it words excessively popular, comic, crude or already out-of-date. [He did this] with more prudence than anyone among us who, not born into this language, lack his scale of judgement; and are not so familiar with men of such wisdom. If sculptors and painters of the present day had at their disposal the tablet of Zeuxis, on which could be seen what is required for a young woman, true with all perfections of form, from which they could extract the various parts serving to represent not only man but all the other animals – just as we have all the words, apt as softened wax to flow beneath every form of seal according to the three forms of discourse divinely revealed by Cicero and each of the other perfect authors – they would be free of this labour laid by for us. And if the same sculptors and painters, on wishing to make an image, prefer to copy an antique statue made by some great artist, rather than several individuals created by nature (in which not all beautiful things are combined) why should we, on wishing to imitate a perfect author in all of which man is capable, or following our leader decide to return to the principles upon which this perfect author has worked before, or then again take up words from those writing in an imperfect time, be satisfied to represent that insignificant beauty our particular nature has been able to receive from heaven? Only one, without doubt, could fall with so great error who lacks all judgement for both beauty and goodness and takes all things indiscriminately for beautiful and good. Such a writer just as he refuses the judgement of men both of past and present, concerns himself but little with

readers who will come after him and will be perhaps more difficult to please than those of today.

If I have said much, it is not from considering myself eloquent, for what can be expected of a man so limited in mind as I, and so long occupied with an enterprise created to give leisure to others and spare them the time men are accustomed to spend in learning learned tongues, that they might spend it in clothing the sciences, which still are without clothing, above all the Holy Scriptures? And I deem myself, in verity, in all certainty, to know less of these than whosoever might take pleasure in Belles Lettres; but I can promise my King that he will profit in no time at all from the little I know and be able to make use of it like myself, but the better, he who is gifted with a higher mind. For the moment I write not for your enlightenment, but to tell you my feelings, and if this seems useful to you, render glory therefore to God, from whom proceedeth all good. But if you find it vain, consider my good will and kindly take pity on my weakness.

I think I have sufficiently demonstrated that we should hold to imitation of a perfect author, and that the opinion of those who refuse so to do is in vain; for they are incapable of putting together words which are truly homogeneous and of true beauty, and also because such people involve themselves in imitation saying either that it is impossible, or that it is not worth the effort, but that we should take from all books whatever falls to hand and other like trivialities in which they confound all parts of eloquence. This makes me believe they have spoken obscurely because they did not wish to philosophise on the question, or seek precisely what in the writings of others might be imitated and why; and among which we can imitate what should be researched from a single, perfect author and what also might be sought and imitated from several authors from various epochs and languages. Hence, and not from boldness or self-satisfaction, but because I desire to find that truth with God's aid, I will take pains to reveal what in my opinion are the parts of eloquence, what is their number, then from which of these parts we might imitate only the effect and not the cause, and why, finally, we can offer ourselves the writings of others, their number, and their imitation.

To begin with, I shall say what I have already said elsewhere in this discourse: I do not believe it can be possible ever to imitate an author's nature, only the judgement proceeding therefrom. And to give an example, a new architect will never be able to represent the nature of an ancient said to have made a temple to Hercules or Diana, such that one could consider it the same; but the judgement of the ancient architect which dictated to him to make robust columns for the temple of Hercules, and slender for that to Diana, and to orientate the Temple's entrance either towards the river, that it turn towards the god the ancients believed to be situated in the river, or towards the road, that it receive the salutations of travellers. And truly these judgements have so much virtue since they alone guide us along the road of multiplicity of the senses, which might be dealt with by eloquence, that we can be content with them in place of nature. But the judgements which launched eloquence along the road where it was in the happiest age, have also been understood by those with so bizarre opinion of the composition of language that even this language was remote from them, I shall endeavour through some examples to reproach them not only for their intelligence but for their very senses.

But I can only give you one example broad enough to embrace all. Although divided with seven parts, it is the seventh alone which will respond to my promises. Let us suppose that the most noble art of drawing had to be taught by the most experienced sculptors and painters, such that no part of the work they wish to compose might contain not the slightest error, and that on the other hand it contain all that is possible for a sculptor or painter to accomplish in the domain of images. Be so kind, excellent painters and sculptors, to lend an ear for a moment to one who can neither paint nor sculpt; and if it seems to you in this wonderful art which is yours I be able to order your secrets with a perfect number, beyond which one might go no higher and below which one should not descend, you will be able to take the measure of what I can and know how to do in this discipline, which I have spent so many years putting in order. There are it seems to me, seven principle levels you must go through, to achieve, ascending from one to the other, through imitating the excellence of your ancient masters. On the first level, then, you should classify all the

lochi which can accommodate not only man, but all other animals capable of being dealt with in drawing, so that anyone seeking the norm to draw one of them might know where to go to find it without hesitation. On the second level, in my opinion, should be placed sex-difference among animals of the same kind, since the same approach should not be used to draw a male and a female. On the third level, age-difference, for there is one way of representing a man with the characteristics of a male and a child, another for the adolescent, yet another for the old man; and because infirmity or fatigue, health or vigour have similarities with age, this should all be entered on the third level. On the fourth, should be placed animals' functions, for it is apt to represent in a particular way a man of religion, in another a soldier – the one humble, the other proud; and likewise an unbroken horse with a certain liveliness, differently a horse accustomed to man, and differently again, a horse dedicated to base labour. On the fifth level should be assembled not only anatomical figures of all animals, the entrails, even the nerves and the muscles that accompany them, to show how to make similar forms, plump or concave; and for painting could be added colours and their mixtures, as well as methods for their use, and finally light and shade and after that all that can be put upon the naked flesh and which is common to both painters and sculptors, that is all the clothing and ornaments relative to animals. For the folds in garments require to be situated on the concave parts of the figure, whereas the places where corporeal reliefs are evident, such as the shoulders, the stomach, the knees, the arms, should be free of folds, such that this salient part of the body be seen to give its form to the garment. It is, however, necessary to dress the image in a small number of folds so as not to fall into confusion, and when they are necessary, it should be with an ornamental effect and always well-situated. On the sixth level, should be classed all the positions or, if you wish, the movements of the body. It is perhaps here more than elsewhere that the artist can show his personal style. Yet in spite of such positions perhaps seeming infinite, since each, with a slight modification, could be divided with many, the principal ones should be few in number; and even if it were desired in addition to classify subdivisions under principals, a number would be without doubt arrived at which would be necessarily finite. At this level, therefore, would be seen not only how many

positions are possible for a human body, or that of another animal, but also the measure of each. For, gathering together all the preceding levels, a single human body, that of a young soldier, clothed, can be placed in myriad positions, but his members disposed in one of them, he will have a size in accordance with a measure which, in another position, would vary on account of some reduction caused by contraction, or some increase produced by a movement extending such and such a body part.

On the seventh level, without which all the others would be in vain, would be situated the judgement which permits choosing: rather a male than a female; a young man in robust health than a tiny tender infant; a soldier than a religious; a dressed rather than a naked man, and said man male; that young soldier dressed: in such a position, the right leg, which is the stronger, before the left, marching rather than at rest; registration of the nature of the animals and the location, what is near, what is far off.

And if it seems to you that via those seven levels a sculptor or a painter might arrive at the imitation of every image created by the most perfect of your old masters, rest assured that via the same number of degrees, once all that is worthy of imitation in the *oeuvre* of an old master in eloquence had been put there, he who is imitating him would arrive in a certain manner at the same degree of excellence as the old master. Thus the first level, which should correspond to yours, that which is decorated with all the animals, would be made up of all the matters it is possible to deal with by eloquence, wisely ordered. And it would be an excellent thing to see one after another the opinions of Aristotle, Plato and other philosophers up to our Christian theologians, and after that all histories flowing from this sense of matters. And these kinds of matters, as I have demonstrated in the due place, do not have to be deprived of sentiments and the places from which said sentiments might be drawn. It is there, in the end, that all the arts, not only the liberal arts, but also the others, noble and less noble, should display their pomp. The second level, for us, which corresponds to yours containing animals' sex, should demonstrate the differences of treatment for verse and prose; for a single matter may be treated by the poet and the orator, but differently by each. The

third level would bring us, so to speak, to the age of the matter, for just as you consider childhood full of simplicity, youth completely devoted to pleasure, virility in its gravity, age in its serenity, so we have an order in meanings, some simple, others pleasant, some grave, others serene, and so on up to now as has been demonstrated above. The fourth level concerns the function of matters, for, howsoever simplicity and pleasure and gravity and serenity may be found there, yet, exactly as with you, it should be considered that the simplicity of a child is not that of an uncultivated man, and the strength of a soldier is different from that of a ruffian, so one classification enables us to see the difference between a matter telling of a child and that dealing with a shepherd or a peasant; between the gravity of the matter dealing with the soul, and that which speaks of heaven, the element, or the republic, even though the first all relate to simplicity and the second, gravity.

The fifth level comprises correct, figured and topical phrases. The correct are those which in the form of flesh should be in the places which nature requires to be the body of eloquence. This [body] comes to birth without words, but ready to receive them, exactly as the matter already prepared and laid out by art and which would already have been put in contact with eloquence and which is a body organised but desiccated and would aspire to be clothed in flesh to fill out all its concave parts. It would wish to show not its flesh but its clothing; which are figured phrases and among them, those so employed by all good authors that they no longer seem metaphors but flow beneath the pen in the manner of garments which mould perfectly the forms of the body, and seem to have been with it when it was united with the reliefs, without making any conspicuous fold. But when in the parts falling away, such an adjustment is no longer suitable, therein are the word-folds, that is to say the metaphor which does not belong to a single author.

And since your sixth degree taught how many positions could be in a body's repertoire, the one we have corresponding thereto could likewise demonstrate how many positions have been in the antique author's repertoire to signify a matter by giving its measure for a like sense, for a similar matter may have

been placed in a straight or oblique position, one containing admiration, one interrogation; positions which though numerous are finite in number.

My seventh and final level, which enables us to access finally everything for which it is possible to hope and thanks to which, when we reach it, we can say we have truly made a copy, is the act of judgement which permits us to choose. We must already have scoured the other six levels; considering for whom we are writing, in what discipline, and what is being written. It is because of the judgement of the one we wish to imitate that we will know how to choose from among the matter: rather that under Plato's jurisdiction than that furnished by Aristotle; rather that dealt with by Basil or Chrysostom than that by Thomas Scotus; and rather grave than serene matters; and rather the gravity of the soul than the republic; rather proper than metaphorical phrases; rather the admiring, than direct, position.

Everything I intended by these seven levels had but the single goal of enabling you to discover those which, in my opinion, might permit us to ascend to imitation, and what is their number. Thus eloquence is not to be considered solely in words, any more than only the stones are seen in a building. But exactly as the stones make accessible to sense the model, which, at first, was held secret in the architect's mind, so the words make accessible the form of eloquence which, at first, without falling into the sense of another, was kept hidden in the mind of the orator. Yet again, as the architect's model could be made perceptible through bricks, white marble or porphyry, so a particular model of eloquence may be clothed in French, Latin or Greek words.

It is therefore necessary to consider that, before being made perceptible to sense through words the model must be given shape, established, and organised by the intellect in imitation of some perfect model. For just as one sees many buildings constructed of delicate marble without any plan, so I have often seen many combinations of elegant words without any form worthy of esteem; and vice versa, many beautiful models made with the crudest stones.

It reminds me that an excellent anatomist once, in Bologna, enclosed a human body in a box full of holes, then exposed it to the current of a river, which decomposed and destroyed within a few days all the flesh on the body, which then exposed of itself the wonderful secrets of nature, surviving alone in the bones and nerves. This body sustained by the bones I compare to the model of eloquence, which is sustained by matter and design alone. And just as this body could have been re-covered with the flesh of a youth or an old man, so the model of eloquence can be clothed in words which flourished in a time of beauty or had languished in an era of decadence. And as it would be unpleasing to the eye a body of which the head was covered with the flesh and skin of a youth and the neck with the wrinkled flesh and skin of an old man; and still more if there were on one side the flesh and skin of a virile man's body, and on the other, that of a delicate woman; even more if there were arms made of human flesh and the chest of that of a bull or a lion; flesh which would thus be homogeneous conforming with the most thriving age; just so would it be disagreeable to the ear and to the intellect to hear and grasp a discourse which did not have all its parts clothed in the same language, was not entirely in conformity with it, and could not pertain to any era. It is when it pertains to the one in which more than all the others it had given proof of its worth, vigour and beauty that it is most worthy of praise; the less could be seen in it the language of another generation, the less it could displease. If the fable of Pelops were in truth reality, it would have been strange to see a shoulder of ivory and the rest of the body otherwise; the same effect, but more pleasant, could be produced by the sight of a satyr, a centaur or a monster.

For all these reasons it can be concluded that in a perfect composition three essential things are to be found: the perfection of age, what serves as sex and species. So eloquence has two faces, one turned towards the model, the other towards the words. As for the model, it comprises, on its side, many things, such as ideas, matters, sentiments, means of introducing the matter, invention, thesis, argument. While the words, besides being divided into three parts, go together with certain forms of construction, the frames, links, arrangement, clauses, number and harmony; all of which, with other things I

shall refrain from saying if that is in accord with your Majesty – and things not of less weight than those I have already revealed and propose to reveal throughout this discourse – will I hope permit us to attain in some manner that summit from which we will be able to contemplate from above all those, below, who devote themselves to composition without wishing to imitate any perfect author.

I regret deeply that I am not permitted to demonstrate to you the ease and speed of all I have said, but up to this point let it suffice to have understood that I have my weapon on my belt, ready to defend myself, if authorised, with the King's agreement and permission from Christian law, against those who erroneously strain to slander me. This weapon, my dear Erasmus, for my own and for your thought's defence, though I know well to differ from your writings, if I be not forbidden to wield it, I hope to draw, not to attack others but not to allow myself to be attacked, with the favour of all good men, against men's taunts.

Appendix II

Ciceronianism and "Nosoponus"

The expressions "Ciceronian" and "Ciceronianism" have fluctuated in terms of their connotations through the centuries. The epithet "Ciceronian", from around the fourth century onwards, while, as we shall see, it sparked off some very volatile responses, was not initially a pejorative term, but a simple description of someone who used Cicero as a model of style. The publication, in 1528, of Erasmus's *Ciceronianus* itself was instrumental in coining the term "Ciceronianism".[432] Subsequently, those who adhere to "Ciceronianism" and who by inference are "Ciceronian", are often, though not always, described in a derogatory light.

According to Sandys, the history of "Ciceronianism", can be traced directly from Cicero, through Quintillian and aspects of Tacitus to the writings of Minucius Felix and Lactantius. Tacitus's *Dialogus de Oratoribus,* for example, which exemplifies features of Cicero's style, deal with the, then, contemporary precedence of poetry over oratory. It was later to become a characteristic of the whole Ciceronian debate as to the relative importance of oratory in relation to the other arts.[433]

In the fourth century, Cicero's Stoic philosophy was woven into the Christian canon by the Church Fathers. Cicero's *De officiis,* for example, was used by Ambrose, as the model for his *De officiis ministrorum*, for the clergy of Milan. Augustine fulsomely praises Cicero in his *Confessions.* Through studying Cicero, he says, in order to attain "the art of eloquence", Augustine came "to love wisdom itself, whatever it might be, and to search for it, pursue it, hold it

[432] See Oxford English Dictionary. It gives the first date in English usage of "Ciceronian" as 1581, hence, "Ciceronianism".
[433] See J.E. Sandys *Harvard lectures on the revival of learning,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905), Chap. VI "The History of Ciceronianism", p.147.

and embrace it firmly".[434] This led him to "examine the holy Scriptures and see what kind of books they were..." Although, even then, at first they seemed for him "quite unworthy of comparison with the stately prose of Cicero" as he "had too much conceit to accept their simplicity ...".[435]

There was a great tension for the early scholars between the integrity of the New Testament's message coupled with its perceived lack of style, and the brilliance of technique united to the paganism of the Classical authors.[436] In terms of oratorical style, Cicero, in particular, was viewed as the paragon of virtue, even if, in terms of Christian virtue[437], he was perceived as somewhat lacking. Jerome, for whom the style of the New Testament made his "skin crawl", famously had a dream in which he died, and "Asked before the judgment seat what manner of man he was, he replied that he was a Christian. 'Thou liest, ' came the reply, 'thou art a Ciceronian, not a Christian'".[438] It was generally felt that there must be a contradiction between Christian devotion and an admiration for the Classical authors; or, as Gregory put it, "the same lips cannot sound the praises of both Jupiter and Christ".[439]

It was through Petrarch's transcription of Cicero's *Epistles* in 1345, that Cicero was again put in the limelight. As Sandys points out, the *Epistles* transformed the nature of the way in which Cicero had hitherto been appreciated. Now not only was he seen as a great orator, but he was also given a human scale: a man of domestic, rather than purely magisterial, dimension. The writing of letters came to be viewed as a worthwhile literary endeavour in itself, something that could store up for the writer a way into posterity. Nevertheless,

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[434] Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin, (London: Penguin, 1980), Book 3, Chap. 4, pp.58-59.
[435] *Ibid.*,, Book 3, Chap. 5, p.60.
[436] See David Norton, *A History of the Bible as Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), Vol.1 , p.32.
[437] For a definition of Christian virtue, I would choose Lorenzo Valla's in *De Voluptate*, Book 3, Ch. 9: "...virtue is not to be desired for itself, as something severe, harsh or arduous, nor is it to be desired for the sake of earthly profit; it is to be desired as a step toward that perfect happiness which the spirit or soul, freed from its mortal portion, will enjoy with the Father of all things, from whom it came...", p.267.
[438] *The Bible and Literature: a reader*, Ed. David Jasper & Stephen Prickett, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1999, pp15-16.
[439] Quoted by Gregory in *The Bible and Literature: a reader*, Ed. David Jasper & Stephen Prickett, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1999), pp.15-16.

or perhaps *because of*, Cicero's new-found place as a writer of domestic concerns, the issue of vocally professing Christianity in the face of an admiration for Cicero was seen as a necessity. Petrarch himself was to say: "if to admire Cicero means to be a Ciceronian, I am a Ciceronian....However, when we come to speak or think of religion, that is of supreme truth and true happiness and of eternal salvation, then I am certainly not a Ciceronian or a Platonist but a Christian".[440] Sandys goes on to trace the influence of Petrarch's translation of the letters through Coluccio Salutati, Lionardi Bruni and Gasparino da Barzizza[441], Guarino of Verona, Poggio Bracciolini to Laurentius Valla.

Valla, while admiring and emulating him, said Cicero "expressed himself more sincerely when he spoke not as a philosopher but as an orator".[442] The issue of Cicero by now had become equated with the inherent value of oratory as opposed to philosophy and poetry. It was argued by Valla that oratory was better than dialectics. "What is more absurd than the procedure of the philosophers?" he demanded. "If one word goes wrong, the whole argument is imperiled." The orator on the other hand through different tactics, bringing in "contrary points", seeking out examples and making comparison, could force "even the hidden truth to appear."[443]

In this context, I would like to turn, now, briefly, to another character in the *Ciceronianus* whose identity has been in doubt: that of Nosoponus. Levi believes that Nosoponus is based on Christophe de Longueil (1488-1522)[444], while Allen suggests that contemporary sources assumed he was based on Bembo. Christophe de Longueil (or Longolius) was a contemporary of Erasmus and fellow countryman, hailing from Brabant. A humanist, he had been tutor to François 1st and his sister Marguerite, in their youth, in France. Later he spent more time in Paris from around 1514-15, just as François

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[440] Petrarch in the *De Ignorantia*, quoted in Valla, Lorenzo *De Voluptate*, trans. A. Kent Hieatt & Maristella Lorch, with intro by Lorch,(New York: Arabis, 1977), p.14.
[441] Of whose small volume of letters was the first book to be published in France, in 1470.
[442] Valla, Lorenzo *De Voluptate*, trans. A. Kent Hieatt & Maristella Lorch, with intro by Lorch, (New York: Arabis, 1977), p.205.
[443] *Ibid.*, p.273.
[444] *Ciceronianus*, p.329.

came to the throne, when he was a friend with, among others, Guillaume Budé, who encouraged him to abandon his study of law for more literary pursuits. He went to Rome with Lazare de Baïf to study Greek under Marcus Musurus and Janus Lascaris, and around 1517-18 he came under the influence of Jacopo Sadoleto and Pietro Bembo.[445] By 1519, however, he was forced to flee Rome having aroused antagonism through a speech that he had made ten years earlier in which he "innocently praised France at the expense of Italy".[446] He subsequently went to Venice and then to Louvain where he stayed with Erasmus himself for three days. After this he returned to Italy, spending the winter at the house of Pietro Bembo near Venice and finally settling in Padua, where, in 1522, he was to die at the age of thirty-three. Levi says that Erasmus made "proper but uneffusive comments on his death. His later correspondence shows, however, that he did not forget him".[447] According to Levi, he represented for Erasmus "a gifted man spoiled by adherence to Ciceronianism.

Allen, on the other hand, suggests that Nosoponus is a caricature of Bembo himself.[448] Pietro Bembo (1470-1547) came from an aristocratic Venetian family. His father, Bernardo, had raised a monument to Dante at Ravenna, as a mark of his enthusiasm for Italian literature. Pietro studied at Florence and Padua, becoming secretary to Leo X[449], and eventually Cardinal to Paul III.[450] Castiglione's Platonic oration which closes the *Book of the Courtier* (1527) is put in the mouth of Bembo. Though an elegant writer and stylist in Latin, he was instrumental in promulgating the use of vernacular Italian. His *Gli Asolani* (Venice, 1505), written in Italian, was in imitation of Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* and his history of Venice, *Rerum Veneticarum Libri XII,* (1551) was published both in Latin and Italian. There is evidence that Bembo, along

[445] Both of these men were secretaries to Pope Leo X. Sadoleto was made a Cardinal in 1536, Bembo a cardinal in 1539.
[446] *Ciceroniamus*, p. 325.
[447] *Ibid.*, p.326.
[448] Allen, *Ep.* 2632, n.196 He also suggests Longueil, (*Longolius).*
[449] From around 1512 to 1520.
[450] From 1529 to 1547.

with Jacopa Sadoleto, was in fact an advocate of Erasmus in Rome, and a defender of him against Aleander.[451]

Both Longeuil and Bembo are mentioned in the *Ciceronianus,* Longeuil at length. It is not within the scope of this appendix to discuss the likelihood of which of the two – Bembo or Longeuil – is the more likely to represent Nosoponus[452], however the juxtaposition of Bembo and Longeuil represents two facets of what came to be seen as the whole debate about "Ciceronianism". On the one hand, there was Bembo, a sophisticated stylist, and Italian through and through, while on the other, there was Longeuil: a stylist himself, but a Northerner, though drawn irresistibly southwards.

Despite his protestations in the *Ciceronianus* about the perils of becoming infatuated with Cicero, Erasmus's own relationship was far from cool. As early as 1501, the publication in Paris of Erasmus's *Officia Ciceronis* accompanied by his summaries and notes signals the interest of Erasmus in the writings of Cicero. His preface is explicit: it is "a golden book". [453] As far as Erasmus is concerned not only the rigour of Cicero's philosophy but his style is exemplary as well. There was the same enthusiasm in the letter-preface of the re-edition of *de Officiis* in 1519, in which, as Magnien says, Erasmus outlined the pagan Cicero's love of truth, his simplicity and his hatred of vanity as being more Christian than the Christians.[454] Probably the highpoint of Erasmus's public admiration for Cicero came in 1522, with the publication of *Convivium religiosum* when Cicero is compared no less than to a saint.

Eugene Garin attaches the later anti-Ciceronian position of Erasmus to his fundamental religious attitude and a return to the sources; it is somewhere, according to Garin, 'chez les Italiens (Pic ou Valla) que le Roterdamois trouve

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[451] See Dickens, A.G. & Whitney, R.D. Jones, *Erasmus the Reformer*,pp. 236-239.
[452] Although I would be inclined to suggest that the orator of the Good Friday speech would be the most likely canditate.
[453] Allen 1, 152, 1. 14-19.
[454] "Erasme y souligne l'élévation spirituelle du 'païen' Cicéron, qui par son amour de la vérité, sa simplicité, sa haine de la vanité, est un auteur plus chrétien que les chrétiens eux-mêmes!" Scaliger, Jules-Cesar, *Orationes Duae Contra Erasmum, Oratio Pro. M. Tullio Cicerone Contra Des. Erasmum (1531) & Adversus Des. Erasmi Roterod. Dialogum Ciceronianum Oratio Secunda (1537)* Ed. Michel Magnien (Geneva: Droz, 1999), p 18.

selon lui les aliments de son opposition à l'Académie Romaine".[455] If the *Ciceronanus* was partly a product of Erasmus's antipathy towards the Roman Academy and, in a more general and less easily definable sense, to "things Italian", then Camillo would automatically have been tarred with the same brush.[456]

[455] "Erasmo e l'umanesimo italiano", *B.H.R.*, t. XXXIII, I, 1971, p. 7-17, quoted in Scaliger, p.26, n55.
[456] Erasmus was in fact mostly a great champion of Italy. For references where he professes this in his letters, see the following: *Allen 1479:* 34-35 To Haio Herman, Basel 31st August 1524; *531:* 47-52 To Guillaume Budé, Antwerp, 14th February 1517; *635:* 9-11 To Johann Froben, Louvain, 25th August 1517; *809:* 140-146 To Mark Lauwerijns, Louvain, 5th April 1518. As regards the Roman Academy, on the other hand, see: *Allen 1488*: 13-14 To William Warham, Basel, 4th September 1524, "In Rome there are some lovers of pagan literature who are pitifully jealous of me..."; *Allen 1496:*203-204 To Philippus Melanchthon, Basel, 6th September 1524, "...those who profess pagan literature in Rome are wondrous indignant with me – jealous, it is clear, of Germany."

Appendix III

Colonna provides a synopsis of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* at the beginning of the book. I give this below (A). Subsequently I discuss similarities between Colonna's "Gate-keepers" and Camillo's "three intellects" (B).

A

Reader, if you wish to hear briefly what is contained in this work, know that Poliphilo tells that he saw remarkable things in a dream, hence he calls the work in Greek words, 'the strife of love in a dream'. He represents himself as having seen many ancient things worthy of memory, and everything that he says he has seen, he describes point by point in the appropriate terms and in an elegant style: pyramids, obelisks, huge ruins of buildings, the varieties of columns, their measurements, capitals, bases, epistyles or straight beams, bent beams, zophori or friezes, and cornices with their ornaments. There is a great horse, an enormous elephant, a colossus, a magnificent portal with its measurements and ornaments, a fright, the five senses represented in five nymphs, a remarkable bath, fountains, the palace of the queen who is Freewill, and an excellent royal feast. He tells of the variety of gems or precious stones, and their nature: a game of chess in a ballet with music in triple time; three gardens, one of glass, one of silk and one a labyrinth, which is human life; a peristyle of brick in whose centre the Trinity was expressed in hieroglyphic figures, that is in the sacred engraving of the Egyptians; the three portals before which he tarried; Polia, her appearance and behaviour. Then Polia leads him to watch four wonderful triumphs of Jupiter, the women loved by the gods and the poets, the various affects and effects of love; the triumph of Vertumnus with Pomona; the sacrifice to Priapus, in ancient style; a marvellous temple, artistically described, where sacrifices were made with miraculous rites and religion. Then how he went with Polia to await Cupid at the shore, where there was a ruined temple, at which Polia persuades Poliphilo to go inside and admire the antiquities. Here he

sees many epitaphs and an inferno depicted in mosaic. How he was frightened and left them to return to Polia. And as he was standing there, Cupid arrived with the boat rowed by six nymphs, on to which they both went, and Amor made a sail with his wings. Then honours were paid to Cupid by the sea-gods and goddesses, the nymphs and monsters. They reached the island of Cytherea, which Poliphilo describes fully as divided into groves, meadows, gardens, streams and springs. Presentations were made to Cupid, and he was welcomed by the nymphs, then they went on a triumphal chariot to a wonderful theatre, all described, in the middle of the island. In its centre is Venus's fountain with seven precious columns. He tells of all that happened there, and how when Mars arrived they left and went to the spring where Adonis's tomb was; and there the nymphs tell of the anniversary that Venus kept in his memory. Then the nymphs persuade Polia to tell of her origin and her falling in love; and that is the first book. In the second, Polia tells of her ancestry, the building of Treviso, the difficulties of her falling in love and their happy conclusion. The story is filled with innumerable and suitable details and correlations, then at the song of the nightingale he awoke. Farewell.

B

Poliphilo meets the Nymphs of the Five Senses[457] who lead him to Three Gate-keepers, or guardians of Freewill. The Gate-keepers are reminiscent of (though not identical with) Camillo's conception of the three intellects of the "interior man"[458]. The idea of the "active intellect" is the same for both Colonna and Camillo, though there are differences in the other two descriptions of the intellect. Nevertheless this similarity, plus the tripartite nature of each author's conception of the idea is significant. In Colonna's version, the intellects are personified by women, representative namely of the "active intellect", the imagination and memory. Each one is concealed behind a delicately wrought curtain. Once Poliphilo has entered through these portals, he at last comes to the palace of Queen Eleuterylida, which Colonna describes in characteristic

[457] Aphea (touch), Osfressia (smell), Orassia (sight), Achoe (hearing) and Geussia (taste)
[458] See Chapter Six for a fuller description of the nature of the "three intellects" of the interior man.

detail. Another example of the tri-partite nature of Colonna's imagery is in the opening of curtains to reveal the three guardians of Queen Eleuterylida. First, Poliphilo comes to "the opening of a splendid portal...blocked by a marvellous and gaily-coloured curtain...all woven from gold thread with a silken weft, showing two worthy figures: one was surrounded by all manner of tools, while the other lifted her virginal face to gaze intently at the sky"[459], where he meets Cinosia (the active intellect). A second curtain, "nobly and artistically designed, dyed in every colour and embroidered in an unusual way with signs, shapes, plants and animals" reveals Indalomena (fantasy or imagination). A third curtain "which was marvellously embroidered with speeches and reasonings, and which depicted in vermiculate style a mass of ropes, nets and ancient instruments for grabbing and grappling" discloses Mnemosyna (memory).

Once Poliphilo has moved through the portals of these three gate-keepers, he meets his companions Logistica (reason) and Thelemia (will, desire). With these two he moves towards his goal, represented by Queen Telosia.

It is at this point that Poliphilo has to make a decision to progress in his journey through one of three doorways that appear before him carved out of hewn rock. The choice is between going through the doorway named "Cosmodoxia" where he finds an aged woman accompanied by six ill-clad servants; or through the doorway named "Theodoxia", where a matronly woman with a golden sword and six "respectful young maidens"[460] await him; or through the doorway marked "Erototrophos" where he is met by the "wanton and capricious"[461] nymph Philtronia and her six "beautiful serving-maids". Despite Logistica's admonition that theirs was a "feigned and cosmetic beauty, deceitful, insipid and vain", Poliphilo is more inclined to take the advice of Thelemia, who "alert and unperturbed by [her] tirade, smiled and made a sign that [Poliphilo] was not to listen to Logistica". Poliphilo gleefully

[459] Colonna, Francesco *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, p.93.
[460] *Ibid.* p.137.
[461] *Ibid.* p. 138.

makes his choice and follows the pubescent nymphs into the depths of the realm of free-will.

Poliphilo's freedom is gained by his active engagement with the three aspects of his interior will, as this episode illustrates. This relates philosophically to the tri-partite nature of Camillo's conception of the intellect of the interior, and the exterior, man.

Appendix IV
The Gamone

Camillo describes how the Pythagoreans thought of the sun as God, and explains at length the Pythagoreans' system called the "Gamone" in which the attributes of the sun are divided into six sources from which comes the generation of life. He equates most of these six Pythagorean sources with a Christian equivalent:

Sun	Light	Flame	Brilliance	Heat	Generation
God the Father	God the Son	Angelic Mind or Intelligible World	Soul of the World, Chaos	Spirit of the World, Breath of the Soul	

He then explains his own adaptation of this system in which the six sources of the Pythagoreans have been restricted to three:

Sun	Light	Flame	Brilliance	Heat	Generation
	God the Creator	Word, the Example	Hyle, the Primary Matter		

The equivalence of "God the Son" with "Light", in the Pythagorean system, is changed in Camillo's version to "God the Creator". Camillo discusses at length in *L'idea* the idea that the "spirit of Christ" moves over and through the world, being the source of generation. For Camillo's discussion of the "Gamone" see *L'idea*, pp.19-21

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Virtual Reality Working Model of the Theatre

The CD contains a VRML working model of Camillo's Theatre. *Windows Media Player*, or an equivalent package, will enable it to run. For best results the model should be loaded onto the hard-drive.